Volume 1

Do Teachers and Teacher Managers in a Primary School Differ in their Views on Work-Related Stress?

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ABSTRACT

Work-related stress amongst teachers and other occupational groups, is a significant problem in terms of its prevalence and costs. Reduction of work-related stress has been attempted by a variety of intervention programmes. Most published, work-related stress programmes appear to have resulted in minimal stress reduction and this thesis is broadly concerned with the reasons for this apparent lack of success.

Responsibility in the workplace for addressing stress usually lies with managers who appear willing to deal with work-related stress, but mis-direct stress programmes at the individual rather than the organizational level. A question arises about what accounts for this apparent contradiction.

Part of the problem seems to be that managers and staff have different perceptions, beliefs and values in relation to stress. Managers may not have an accurate view of what is causing stress in their staff and so the 'real' stress issues are not targeted by the stress management programmes which managers provide.

Another part of the problem centres on the informal communications between managers and staff around issues to do with work-related stress. If they were better able to communicate and identify the real stress problems, then more effective interventions could be developed.

If managers and staff hold differing beliefs on work-related stress, can any differing manager-staff views be observed by direct observation? This thesis attempted to discover whether any differing views on work-related stress were observable in the talk of teachers and teacher managers in a primary school. When teachers and their managers are not agreed on the nature of the stress problem to be addressed, there would appear to be little likelihood that a stress management programme would be effective in alleviating teachers' stress.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview

When reviewing articles on the management of stress in the workplace, it seemed that most published interventions had not resulted in a significant reduction of work-related stress. This thesis was concerned with the possible reasons for this apparent lack of success.

The literature has shown that work-related stress amongst teachers is a matter of concern. Increasingly, over the last two decades, teachers have reported feelings of stress, leading to a reduced capacity to carry out their duties. There is concern about sickness absence due to stress and about disruption to the efficient functioning of the school as an organisation, as a result of stressed staff. (Bowers & McIver, 2000; Cooper, 1997; Cooper, Cooper & Eaker, 1988; Dunham, 1984; Goss & Mearns, 1997; Goss, 2001; Health and Safety Commission [HSC] Education Services Advisory Committee [ESAC] 1990a; Kelly, 1992; Kyriacou, 1987; Lothian Region Education Dept.,1993; McCormick & Solman, 1992; Travers & Cooper, 1993; Travers & Cooper, 1996).

Concern about the effects of work-related stress is reflected across a wide range of occupations. There are debates about the considerable economic costs to organisations resulting from staff absence, ill health, turnover and burnout which are often assumed to be stress related (Bosma, Marmot, Hemingway, Brunner, & Stansfield, 1997; Burish, 2000; Bussing & Glaser, 2000; Confederation of British Industry [CBI] 2002; French, Caplan & Harrison, 1982; Head, Martikainen, Kumari, Kuper & Marmot, 2002; Health and Safety

Commission [HSC] 1999; Health and Safety Executive [HSE] 2001b; HSE, 2003; Hobfoll, 1998; Karasek & Theorell, 1990; Kuper & Marmot, 2003; Lazarus, 1991; Morrison & Payne, 2001; Muncer, Taylor, Green & McManus, 2001; Nielsen, Kristensen & Smith-Hansen, 2002; Payne & Morrison, 2002; Singleton, 2001; Stansfield, Fuhrer, Head, Ferrie & Shipley, 1997; Stansfield, Head & Marmot, 2000; Teacherline, 2001).

A definition of work-related stress is provided (see section 1.2). An attempt is made to distinguish between work-related and personal stress (see section 1.4).

Concern about work-related stress has been considerable and attempts at stress reduction have been numerous (see Table 1.1). It appears from published stress programmes, and from critical reviews of the literature that problems posed by work-related stress have seldom been matched by solutions (Nytro, Saksvik, Mikkelsen, Bohle & Quinlan, 2000; Jarvis, 2002).

In the workplace, the design and implementation of stress intervention, appears to have taken place on the initiative of managers, with the apparent intention of tackling stress at an organizational level (HSE, 1995). The number of studies launched over an extended period (see section 1.7) would appear to imply a readiness on the part of managers to address work-related stress at an organizational level.

In practice work-related stress programmes are often aimed at the personal or individual level (see Table 1.1) for example, providing a short series of sessions on muscle relaxation training, rather than targeting organisational issues such as demands, change, relationships and support in the workplace (Palmer, Cooper & Thomas, 2001) which are sustaining stressful working conditions. This mis-direction of stress interventions (DeFrank & Cooper, 1987;

Nytro et al, 2000; Reynolds & Shapiro, 1991) might be easily detected and remedied, when there is the will to do so.

In order to explain why most work-related stress programmes appear ineffective it seems necessary to explain why they seem designed to intervene at the individual, rather than the organizational level. In order to explain this mis-direction, it seems necessary to account for a change in the manager's position from apparent readiness to launch programmes aimed at work-related stress, whilst implementing programmes which offer personal stress training aimed at individual members of staff. It may help to explore this apparent contradiction (see Figure 1.4).

Part of the problem in implementing successful stress programmes seems to be that managers and staff appear to hold different views on issues which seem related to the process of stress management. When stress intervention is being considered, managers and staff differ in their "readiness for change" (Nytro et al, 2000, p.221). When managers perceive a need to initiate change, staff may experience fatigue caused by repeated exposure to change from a succession of managers.

Managers and staff may be unlikely to achieve shared perceptions on how to tackle work-related stress if there is a lack of trust between them (Daniels, 1996; Beer, Eisenstat & Spector, 1988; Nytro et al, 2000; Porter, Lawler, & Hackman, 1975). Managers' actions, "....intended to increase understanding and trust, often produce misunderstanding and mistrust" (Argyris,1990, p.6).

It is important for staff to experience a sense of "organisational justice" in the workplace (Novelli, Kirkman, & Shapiro, 1995, pp.16-18). The proportions of staff who believe they are treated unfairly at work may be high (Taris, Kalimo & Schaufeli, 2002). When staff believe there is unfair treatment, this could result

in a range of negative views and perceptions (Geurts, Schaufeli & Rutte, 1999) not conducive to co-operating with managers on a stress reduction programme.

It is important that staff have a perception that they can control the demands placed upon them in the workplace (Jimmieson, 2000; Palmer, Cooper & Thomas, 2001; Tattersall & Farmer, 1995; Troup & Dewe, 2002). When managers initiate a stress programme, they may seek to control the change process and this can be resented by staff (Nytro et al, 2000).

When staff perceive they are treated unfairly this may lead to stress (Truchot & Deregard, 2001). Perceived control is usually seen as ameliorating a sense of stress (Palmer, Cooper & Thomas, 2001; Spector, 1998). Managers may not always appreciate that issues such as justice and control are related to stress. Managers may not perceive staff's stress accurately. Differing views and perceptions between managers and staff, on issues related to stress and its management, may lead to mis-direction (see Figure 1.5). Managers may not be aiming interventions at the 'real' causes of work-related stress.

Another part of the problem seems to be difficulties in communication between managers and staff, in particular informal manager–staff communication (Nytro et al, 2000). Formal communication is likely to be initiated by managers through routine meetings and written documentation, but within formally designated groupings, informal groups will form and create their own subtle, informal communications. Informal groups can engage in competitive activities that are against the interests of the organisation as a whole (Martin, 1998) and disruptive to any attempt to conduct a successful stress programme. If managers and staff were better able to communicate and identify the 'real' underlying problems, more effective interventions could be developed.

If managers and staff hold differing beliefs on work-related stress, this may be worthy of closer examination. A question arises about whether any differing perceptions can be confirmed by direct observation. Are any differing views between managers and staff, on work-related stress, observable in their talk? In considering why most stress interventions appear ineffective, this would appear to be a key component for investigation.

The Pilot Study trialled methods, procedures, data gathering and analysis. These were refined and developed for the Main Study which compared and contrasted the talk of teachers and teacher managers in order to determine whether they had differing views on the subject of workplace stress and, if so, in what ways were they different.

There are implications for educational psychologists (EPs). The relationships between EPs and their EP managers may be enhanced, and work-related stress reduced, when EP managers are able to acknowledge that their views on EP stress differ form the views of EPs themselves. EPs and their managers may then be in a position to move towards shared concerns. For EPs as stress management trainers, when managers and staff in a school have differing views on work-related stress, the EP needs to be aware of the nature of any such differences before attempting to carry out a stress management intervention.

Computerised and manual literature searches are detailed in Appendix 1.

1.2. Defining Work-Related Stress

This section will attempt to identify a straightforward definition of stress which may act as a standard. This might be used as a template, against which can be compared stress definitions or descriptions which may emerge in the

researcher's dialogue with managers and staff. A later section will look beyond definitions, at models of stress which may help explain the outcomes of this study.

1.2.1. Confusion over Terminology

There may be some confusion in the literature about whether the term, stress, relates to an internal response or an external event. The onset of this confusion is credited to Selye (1936) whose definition of stress was biologically based and related to internal changes in the organism. Selye (1936) observed the general internal reaction of an organism to widely differing, external stimuli of a chemical, physical and biological nature, and described this internal response as, strain. The term, strain was borrowed from engineering, where it is used with reference to the internal responses of tension within a structure. Selye (1936) however, when writing in English, which was not his first language, mis-translated and substituted the term, stress. In engineering the term, stress, denotes an external agent. This confusion of the two terms has remained in the stress literature ever since. The definition of stress used in this thesis refers to stress as an internal event.

Cox (1993) reports several different, but overlapping definitions or models of stress in the workplace. The first approach, rooted in engineering, treats stress as an independent variable, describing stress in terms of aversive, or noxious characteristics of the environment. Stress is what happens to the person, not what happens within the person. The second approach, from a physiological standpoint, treats stress as a dependent variable, describing it in terms of the person's response to a threatening or damaging environment.

Engineering and physiological models are criticised on the grounds that they treat the person as a passive vehicle, ignoring the needs and attitudes of the individual (Cox, 1993). A third way, which Cox (1993) describes as psychological, and preferable to the above approaches, construes stress in terms of the interaction between the person and their work environment, in the sense of how well the person fits the job. The person's fitting the job can be seen in terms of the degree to which the employee's attitudes and abilities meet the demands of the job, or the extent to which the job meets the worker's needs.

In the "transactional" definition or model (Cox, 1993, p.16) stress is seen as an intervening variable between stimulus and response. This model moves on from a notion of the person fitting the job, to describing the cognitive and emotional consequences which follow from his/her relationship with the work environment.

The transactional model introduces the idea of a person's perceptions of difficulties encountered (transactions) in the workplace, the negative feelings which may follow those perceptions and, in particular, whether the person feels that they can or cannot cope with the problems arising.

1.2.2. Arriving at a Definition

The transactional definition led to the HSE (1995) definition of work-related stress which is expressed as, "Stress is the reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed upon them. It arises when they worry that they can't cope." (HSE, 1995, p.4). This wording is similar to that in widespread use in other areas of work-related stress literature (Cox, 1990,

1993; Lazarus, 1966, 1976). The latest variation is more concise than its predecessors and clarifies the negative nature of the person's stress reaction. Work-related stress is, "The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed upon them." (HSE, 2003, p.1).

Both definitions (HSE, 1995; HSE, 2003) seem clear and concise, related to the literature and psychological in nature, rather than biological or mechanical. The earlier (HSE, 1995) definition appears to be expressed in everyday language with its references to worrying and not coping. It seemed possible that manager and staff dialogues might include such terms. Both definitions were therefore kept in mind during the coding process described later (see Figure 2.1).

1.3. Stressors

The frequently used term 'stressor' is defined as a condition or situation that requires an adaptive response from the person (Beehr & Newman, 1978). This may not be a clear definition, but the term, stressor is to be distinguished from the term 'stress', as defined above, in that the former refers to an external event, that is the source(s) or cause(s) of stress external to the person.

Use of the term, stressor, is not confined to any one source of stress. Work-related stress may arise from everyday situations such as the emotional climate of the workplace and the transfer of essential and routine information between colleagues (Cooper, Cooper & Eaker, 1988). Psycho-social sources of organizational stress are frequently listed as culture, demands, control, role, change, relationships, and support in the workplace. Work-related stress may

also arise from physical sources such as high noise levels, poor lighting, inadequate ventilation and so on (Palmer, Cooper & Thomas, 2001).

1.4. Distinguishing between Work-Related and Personal Stress

Under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974, employers have a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that their workplaces are safe and healthy. The concept of assessing risk to health at work and basing control measures on such an assessment was introduced on a legal basis in the Management of Health and Safety Regulations (1993/1999). The interpretation of the 1974 Act was then extended to include stress. "Ill health resulting from stress caused at work has to be treated the same as ill health due to other, physical causes present in the workplace." (HSE, 1995).

HSE (1995) acknowledges personal stress in relation to domestic or personal circumstances outside work, but the responsibility for dealing with work-related stress is located within the work setting, as part of the role and function of managers. Managers are encouraged to be consistent in their interactions with staff, give credit for a job done properly, fit the person to the job and ensure that the job is "do-able." (HSE, 1995, p.11). Employers are encouraged to take work-related stress seriously and, "....ensure.....that excessive stress is not seen as a personal problem but an issue which managers, staff and the organisation as a whole are committed to addressing." (HSE, 1995, p.10).

There is the potential for confusion in that the HSE (1995) position changes in a later section, to the extent that the responsibility for work-related stress is shifted, without explanation, from management to a personal level. There are recommendations such as: staff to attend courses so that they are better able to

handle the pressures they may encounter; employees to seek help through their GP; counselling for staff may be appropriate, or managers might, "...refer the person on for further help." (HSE, 1995, p.15).

Within the law there may be difficulties for those managers who wish to adopt a view that stress is mainly personal. Within a legal framework, when an employee takes legal action against an employer, the onus is on the employer to state what they have done to fulfil their responsibilities to carry out risk assessment and action as a consequence. A court may then decide whether stress was foreseeable by the employer and whether such action was sufficient. A judgement might then be made on the basis of forseeability and legal action taken, or not, against the employer. There may be no legal need to make a judgement as to whether stress arose, in whole or in part, from non-work sources (Buchan, 2004).

Work-related stress might therefore be summarised as stress for which the line manager is responsible; personal stress is that for which the individual takes responsibility. This thesis is concerned with work-related stress and this wording offers the prospect of concisely explaining to managers and staff, what is meant by work-related stress as opposed to personal stress. This position should not appear too simplistic, and there is a sense in which there is a corporate responsibility for stress, rather than responsibility being held by one manager or a management team. It may be preferable to see responsibility as a balance which, in the case of work-related stress, is tilted towards managers.

1.5. The Prevalence and Costs of Work-Related Stress

Salmon (2003) and Cashdan (2003) have identified some of the characteristics of good quality research. In particular Cashdan (2003) has emphasised the need to demonstrate that the intended research is within an area worthy of investigation. This section and the one following, describe prevalence, costs and effects, in an attempt to show that work-related stress is an area of concern, in which it would be valuable to gather more information.

A summary of surveys about stress at work, provided by the HSC (1999) provides an overview of the prevalence of stress in the general working population. The summary covers the period between 1995 and 1998. Findings included: 72% of respondents thought that stress levels were worse than in the previous year (1997); managing stress was predicted to be the fastest growing area of work for health at work teams over the following two years (1998); an estimated 279,000 people in Great Britain believed that they were suffering from work-related stress, anxiety or depression and a further 254,000 people suffered from an illness which they believed to have resulted from work-related stress (1995).

Concern about teacher stress has been such that The National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) commissioned a national study to assess the extent and sources of teacher stress throughout the UK (Travers & Cooper, 1996). That study traces the background of changes in education, dating from a period of rapid growth between 1955 and 1975, when education was described as the fastest growing service in public or private sectors.

Travers and Cooper (1996) draw attention to cuts in public expenditure, changes in curriculum, finance and management following the Education Reform Act, 1988. Other changes are noted including teachers' pay and conditions of service. Travers and Cooper (1996) assert that these changes have led to extra pressures upon teachers, with greater levels of uncertainty, job insecurity and the restructuring of teaching itself. Societal changes are noted including: increasing contradictions in the role of the teacher; changes in the attitude of society towards the teacher; uncertainty about the objectives of the education system.

1.5.1. Estimates of Teacher Stress

The prevalence of teacher stress is noted by HSC, ESAC (1990a; updated, 1998). In describing the results of a survey in Great Britain, based on self reports of work-related illness, they found that approximately 37,000 teachers or former teachers, suffered from stress, anxiety or depression caused by their work. A further 26,000 suffered from some physical illness they believed to be due to the stress at work. These figures represent 4% of, "....current and recently working teachers." (p.5) but it is not clear how representative was the sample. The survey was carried out in 1995, but it is not stated how many years are covered by the term "recently" (p.5). There are concerns about the reliability of self-report data. There is the prospect of compliance; when people are asked whether they are stressed, they may have a tendency to say that they are.

In a study carried out by Kelly (1992) 70% of teachers in a sample reported their own stress at work to be within the range from *extremely stressful*, to *very*

stressful, to *cause for concern*. Over 90% of the sample described their stress levels as higher, or very much higher, than three years previously. Again there are concerns here about the reliability of self-report data.

Teacherline (2001) claim to have systematically assessed the severity of stress problems reported by teachers and found them to be more serious than shown in comparable professional groups. It is claimed that stress is the main health and safety concern in four out of every five schools. Such concerns are not confined to the UK and similar trends in teacher stress are reported in other countries (Kyriacou,1987; Manthei, Gilmore, Tuck & Adair, 1996).

Comparing teaching with other occupations, Cooper, Cooper and Eaker (1988) and Cooper (1997) conducted stress evaluations of 104 jobs, showing a picture of increase in perceived stress between the first and second evaluations. Teachers were numbered amongst fourteen jobs showing major increases in perceived stress: the list was; armed forces, social worker, linguist, teaching, ambulance, local government, nursing, occupational therapist, biochemist, farming, youth/community work, water work, radiographer and brewing. Teachers were included in the top twenty most stressful jobs (1997) which were listed as: prison service, police, social worker, teaching, ambulance, nursing, doctor, fire brigade, dentistry, mining, armed forces, construction, management, acting, journalism, linguist, film producer, professional sport, catering/hotel, public transport. There are reliability concerns with these studies. It appears the stress ratings were simply agreed by a panel of stress researchers, without any indication as to how this process was carried out.

1.5.2. Costs of Stress and Absence from Work

Stress is particularly associated with absence from work (CBI, 1999). That study surveyed absence from work, based on data from 537 public and private sector organisations. It was estimated that 200 million days were lost through sickness absence in 1998, an average of 8.5 days per employee. This represents a loss of 3.7 per cent of working time. On average, public sector workers are absent for 9.2 days per year, whereas private sector workers take off an average of 7.5 working days per year. The cost of this absence was estimated at £10.2 billion in 1998, an average cost of £426 per worker. For non-manual workers, work-related stress was felt to be the second highest contributor to absence, after minor illness. Work-related stress was broken down into two areas; pressures from managers and high workload.

In a repeat of this survey (CBI, 2001) it was reported that the total cost of sickness absence, including poorer quality services and products, was much higher than previously estimated. If the costs to the government in increased welfare payments is added then the total was claimed to be around £23 billion per year. However, this report gives no details about the survey methods and the components involved in calculating these cost figures.

Teacherline (2001) a telephone counselling service for teachers, citing Goss (2001) claim that the cost of health-related teacher absence, solely in terms of salaries paid to absent staff, is £37 million. Stress is estimated to be the fourth most common cause of teacher absence, preceded by colds, stomach complaints and headaches, which could be stress related.

1.5.3. Wider Cost Implications of Work-Related Stress

Other surveys have included absence from work in combination with a range of factors associated with stress. Bowis (1994) estimated that two or three, out of every ten employees will experience a mental health problem, at some stage in their career. Bowis (1994) asserts that anxiety and depression, result in substantial occupational problems, including absence from work (91 million working days lost in 1991) reduced productivity, higher staff turnover, and poor concentration and judgement, leading to bad decisions and accidents at work. These result in significant costs to industry, estimated at around £5.3 billion annually.

Other estimates reveal that 6.5 million working days were lost in Britain in 1995, due to stress, depression, anxiety or a physical condition ascribed to work-related stress (HSE, 2001b). It was concluded that the resultant annual cost to employers, based on 1995/96 figures, was £370 million.

An estimate from HSE (2003) states that up to 13.4 million days per year are lost due to stress at work with up to 5 million people affected at a given point in time.

HSE (1995) states that stress at work is detrimental to the organisation resulting in, for example, sickness absence, poor time keeping, tension and conflict between colleagues, reduced output, increased wastage and error rates and poor decision making. However, these factors were not quantified and no evidence was quoted in support of these stated consequences of stress.

It is often difficult to ascertain how representative was the sample surveyed, with details of procedures, use of questionnaires and so on, seldom available. It

would help if absence figures were always reported as number of days lost per employee per year; a national total of days lost is difficult to get into perspective.

Wide variation in the figures from different sources casts doubt on their reliability (in particular HSE (2001; 2003) figures, compared to CBI (1999; 2001). There may be a need for agreement on a list of factors which can be associated with stress when costs are being calculated. It remains problematic therefore to reliably establish nationally, the number of working days lost owing to stress and identify precisely the consequences to the employing organisations.

1.6. The Effects of Work-Related Stress

Much of the concern about the effects of stress centres on the implications of staff turnover and absence from work. Teacherline (2001) reported that stress and anxiety lead to increased sickness absence, increased rates of staff turnover, decreased morale and decreased numbers of applicants for vacant posts. These claims are supported with detail on number of calls received, 25,000 over a two year period, with calls classified according to the main issues raised by teachers.

Travers and Cooper (1996) describe the effects of stress in terms of loss of trained staff through sickness absence, turnover and early retirement, with implications for pension funds and additional costs of recruitment and training.

The HSC, ESAC (1990b) notes the disruption to the workplace following increased and unpredictable sickness absence, early retirement and high turnover of staff. Stress escalates when such factors, in turn, can create stress

amongst teaching staff having to cover for absent colleagues and make up for the inefficiencies of stress impaired colleagues.

Caution needs to be exercised in relating stress to sickness absence from work. It has been asserted that there is little relationship between occupational stress and absence from work. Regarding a range of "organisational behaviours" (p.50) including absence and staff turnover, poor performance and industrial conflicts, it is concluded that the evidence for occupational stress causing such organisational behaviours is weak or non-existent. The use of the term, occupational stress, is described as crude and misleading when used as an explanatory tool (Briner and Reynolds, 1993).

It is difficult to trace whether any given absence from work can reliably be attributed to stress, for example, whether a doctor's note is required for a sickness absence to be classified as stress-related, or whether a self-diagnosis is acceptable.

Litigation undertaken by stressed employees under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974, resulted in a High Court ruling (Walker v Northumberland County Council, 1994) and subsequent out-of-court settlement, which awarded a social worker substantial damages against his employer, following work-related stress. This was seen as a landmark ruling with considerable cost implications for the future. Cost implications may result from managers being distracted or disengaged from their management duties when responding to employees' legal actions.

1.7. Effectiveness of Work-Related Stress Interventions

Studies describing programmes to reduce work-related stress in schools have been difficult to locate. Articles have tended to focus on surveying the extent or severity of teachers' stress (Kelly, 1992; Kyriacou, 1987; Manthei, Gilmore, Tuck & Adair, 1996; Teacherline, 2001; Travers & Cooper, 1996). There appears to be a small number of studies which have focussed on providing personal stress management for teachers (Bamford, Grange & Jones, 1990; Murphy & Claridge, 2000). There are programmes designed to operate at the level of the school as an organization, but these are usually aimed at helping schools to deal with trauma and stress following bereavement and critical incidents (O'Hara, Taylor, & Simpson, 1994; Taylor, 2003). EP services in Somerset (2002) Waltham Forest (undated) and Wiltshire (undated) have produced similar materials. Issues such as culture, demands, control, role, change, relationships, and support in the workplace (Palmer, Cooper & Thomas, 2001) appear to have seldom been the focus of stress reduction programmes in schools. Studies shown in Table 1.1 have therefore been selected from the wider literature.

In attempting to establish the extent of effectiveness in published stress interventions, it may be argued that studies selected for review should have met rigorous criteria, including use of a randomised experimental group, a control group and evaluation procedures. Examination of review articles reported in Sections 1.7.2. and 1.7.3. (DeFrank and Cooper, 1987; Matteson et al, 1987; Newman and Beehr, 1979; Nytro et al, 2000; Reynolds and Shapiro, 1991) indicated that studies meeting such criteria would have been difficult to locate.

It was decided, therefore, to appraise a sample of ten studies contained in a recent collection of papers from an established source in the field of work-related stress (Kompier & Cooper, 1999). These studies covered work carried out in Europe, including the UK. Some studies from the USA have been added to widen the view beyond Europe, as shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. Outcomes of work-related stress programmes

Study	n	Level of inter-vention Individual/ Organiz-ational	Type of inter-vention Physical Didactic Cognitive Mixed Other	Duration of inter-vention	Control /no control	Measure stress reduction by	Stress reduced?
1. Whatmore et al 1999	270	Individual	Mixed [physical didactic cognitive]	6 months	Control	Self-report	Yes control & physical groups
2, Carrington et al 1980	154	Individual	Physical	5 ½ months	Control	Self-report	Yes intervntn & control groups
3. Sallis et al 1986	76	Individual	Mixed [physical cognitive assertiveness]	2 months	Control	Self-report + physiological	Yes re anxiety No re stress
4. Poelmans et al 1999	3261	Individual & organi-zational	Mixed [physical didactic cognitive]	Difficult to discern	No control	Attitudes to stress training	Not measured
5. Graca et al 1999	1263	Individual & organi-zational	Not decided	Not decided	Not decided	Not decided	Not decided
6. Lourijsen et al 1999	850	Organi-zational	Mixed [training+ restructuring]	3 years	Control	Self report + absenteeism data	Difficult to discern
7. Beerman et al 1999	228	Organi-zational	Discussion groups	10 weeks	Control	Self-report	Yes
8. Wynne et al 1999	953	Individual & organi-zational	Mixed [training+ restructuring]	Difficult to discern	No control	Not measured	Not measured
9. Nettersrtom 1999	29	Individual & organi-zational	Mixed [training+ restructuring]	3 ½ years	No control	Employee satisfaction + passenger complaints + absenteeism data	Not measured
10. Bagnara et al 1999	128	Organi-zational	Discussion groups + supervision	Difficult to discern	Control	Self-report	Difficult to discern

The term, individual, above, refers to helping individuals cope with their own stress, for example through the teaching of relaxation techniques or imparting information on stress (stress awareness). Organizational, may refer to intervening in the macro system at the level of policies, procedures, reporting structures, and/or the micro system, including team building, co-operative problem solving and so on.

Self-report measures were typically by questionnaire. Physical methods of stress reduction included relaxation and other self-control strategies such as meditation. Physiological measures included blood pressure and noting incidence of headaches, back pain, sleeping disturbances and so on. Cognitive methods were seldom described in any detail.

The study by Poelmans, Compernolle, De Neve, Buelens and Rombouts (1999) included a critique of its own failure to evaluate any impact on stress levels. "The most important weakness of the project is the limited concern to evaluate effects in a systematical way." (p.138). Such evaluations as were taken involved, for example, noting the number of personnel who enrolled in stress management sessions. These numbers were reported as "very satisfactory" (p.136). The study was reported as successful as it resulted in the company's acknowledging that stress is an important topic. At-risk groups were identified and help offered, but, "We have no idea of the actual stress-level, and thus no indication of the improvement of the situation." (p.138).

In the study by Wynne and Rafferty (1999) the authors asked staff in an airline company to suggest strategies for work-related stress prevention. The most frequently reported responses were requests for improvements in communications, management style, working conditions and "working climate" (p.255). Interventions included training for staff in how to cope with shift work.

Management instigated the redesigning of shift schedules, improvements in communication, career development training, development of stress awareness and health promotion. There was no evaluation; "The stress prevention initiative.....was undertaken as a pragmatic exercise.....As a result, the formal evaluation of the stress prevention initiative by Aer Rianta was not a high priority." (p.262).

In other studies where stress reduction outcomes are measured, indications are that improvement may be slight. In the project reported by Lourijsen, Houtman, Kompier and Grundemann (1999) stress outcomes were measured as one of thirteen factors including absenteeism, job content, physical working conditions and so on. One outcome of the project was fewer complaints from staff about stress, but the authors considered this to be, "....of little practical value because the initial situation....was already fairly positive...." (p.105).

The study by Graca and Kompier (1999) which promised to be a major study amongst employees in a large European banking organization, was written up as a project still in progress. The team were spending one day per week, engaged in discussing and planning, but the intervention had not started. A claimed interim outcome was that management had arrived at the idea that stress was a serious issue and they, ".....are relatively open minded towards a comprehensive health promotion programme at the workplace." (p.282). It may be unusual to find a study published at this embryonic stage, with little information available in the form of procedures and outcomes to inform the reader.

The study by Beermann, Kuhn and Kompier (1999) appeared to be one of the few successful studies. These authors employed a discussion group or "health circle" (p.227) approach involving nine people. The function of the group

was to identify sources of stress in the workplace, their rate of occurrence and how they might be dealt with. The group was also asked to comment on how work requirements could be improved, presumably to reduce the likelihood of stress arising in future. The group met every two weeks for a total of five meetings, each lasting one and a half hours. Fifty two stressful work situations and fifty three suggestions for improvement were identified. Improvement suggestions were submitted to the hospital management "for decision" (p.231).

An evaluation pre-measure was structured by selecting the staff in two hospital wards to be the recipients of a questionnaire. They were asked to list their "work demands and complaints" (p.232). A total of 228 hospital employees were sent the questionnaire which seems rather a large number of staff for two hospital wards. There was a wide range of complaints such as backache, headaches and sleep problems, with 87% of respondents reporting stress due to trouble with patients, superiors and colleagues. It is not clear how this data was fed into the health circle discussions. Six months after the health circle discussions were completed, staff were asked by questionnaire to report any changes related to work-related stress. Sixty per cent of employees reported significant improvements. No attempt was made to control for the possible effect of factors outside the workplace, such as family or domestic issues which could have contributed to headaches, sleep problems and so on.

Netterstrom (1999) described a workplace intervention with 23 bus drivers in Denmark. The project was initiated by the employer in order to improve working conditions, as part of their response to Danish health and safety legislation on the working environment (Working Environment Act, 1975). In a similar way to the corresponding UK (1974) legislation, the Danish statutory framework allows inclusion of "psychological disorders" (p.177) as constituting an occupational

health and safety problem. The initial strategy was to involve bus drivers in workshops which discussed managers' co-operation and support of the drivers, the operation of the bus traffic control centre, increased working hours, staff turnover, ease of operation of the buses, their cleanliness and so on. The drivers were given seminars on shift rota planning, finance and maintenance procedures. Working groups then drew up a specification showing how the identified bus route should be run, with a view to monitoring the shifts, finance and so on, in operation. The intention was that the drivers themselves would then be in a position to run one of the bus routes, which they were invited to do, with the proviso that they met the basic contractual and cost requirements.

Job satisfaction was measured by questionnaire at three monthly intervals, with 60% of drivers stating that their job satisfaction was "relatively high" (p.186) at the initial, three month point, decreasing to 40% at the fourth, three month point of measuring. Stress outcomes were not measured.

Netterstrom (1999) located the above study within a context of "Work Stress in Denmark" (p.173) acknowledging that stress prevention programmes had not, at that stage, been conducted in Denmark. The primary aim of this study was to improve job satisfaction, with stress reduction seen as a consequence of that. There was no evidence cited here in support of a link between stress and job satisfaction. If, as the author implies, stress reduction correlates with job satisfaction, then the project was a success.

A study by Bagnara, Baldasseroni, Parlangeli, Taddei and Tartaglia (1999) reported a stress management programme carried out in a school of nursing in Italy. The authors stated that their work was carried out, in part, in response to European Union directives on safety at work. This seems similar to UK (1974) legislation, emphasising risk assessment as a basic measure for safeguarding

well-being of workers. A broad concept of health was employed to include "psycho-physical integrity" (p.298).

Bagnara et al (1999) provided rationale in the form of references to literature illustrating that nurses are prone to "burn out" and focused their intervention on reducing stress and burn out in nurses. Literature was cited in support of the programme design which involved the use of supervision and group discussion of work-related problems. Individual supervision was provided to participants in 12 meetings over a six month period, with a similar timetable followed for the group discussion sessions. The experimental group also had daily opportunity to refer to a more experienced colleague. The control group had the latter provision only.

Bagnara et al (1999) evaluated their programme using a range of self-report questionnaires covering anxiety, self-esteem, "working expectations," "working involvement" (p.306) and general health, which they presumed correlate with, or were synonymous with stress. Change was measured by pre-post administration of questionnaires with no account taken of possible confounding variables. For example anxiety and self-esteem ratings might have varied as a result of changes in family relationships or other factors external to the workplace. A clear measure of improvement was difficult to discern.

1.7.1. Paucity of Successful Work-Related Stress Interventions

Out of ten studies in Table 1.1, three studies were aimed solely at the organizational level and one of these, Beerman et al (1999) was reported as successful. Other studies, aimed at a combination of organizational and individual levels, could not reported as successful because outcomes were not

measured. One of three individually targeted studies indicated that the stress reduction of the intervention population exceeded that of controls, but the improvement observed was in anxiety ratings, not stress.

Examination of review articles revealed a wider picture. The predominance of ineffectiveness in stress interventions was confirmed in a review of occupational stress literature by Nytro et al (2000). The conclusions were that few published, work-related stress programmes produce positive outcomes. Nytro et al (2000) assert that this low success rate is not sufficiently acknowledged in the literature: on the contrary, some sections of the literature give the impression that organisational change is a relatively unproblematic exercise, provided certain basic rules are followed.

A review by Reynolds and Shapiro (1991) described a pattern of unsuccessful outcomes in stress programmes, which has persisted in the occupational stress management literature for decades.

1.7.2. Mis-Directed Stress Interventions

In Table 1.1, there is an impression of intervention mis-directed at the individual level, with seven out of ten studies reporting interventions at the individual level, or a combination of individual and organizational interventions.

DeFrank and Cooper (1987) reviewed twenty four studies on work-related stress. All of these studies described interventions mis-directed at the individual, using techniques such as relaxation and time management.

A review of work-related stress literature carried out by Reynolds and Shapiro (1991) confirms a persistent tendency to aim interventions at the individual, rather than the organisation. Mis-direction was not the sole criticism.

Interventions were described as weak, with small proportions of staff spending a small amount of time with a trainer or counsellor.

Nytro et al (2000) noted emphasis on intervention mis-directed at the employee rather than the organisational level. A range of methodological errors were also described including weaknesses in research design and unclear links to theoretical models.

Nytro et al (2000) may be criticised on the grounds that their article is a review of other evaluation studies rather than a direct appraisal of studies on work-related stress. It is not clear how many studies, written over what period and on what scale, they have covered in order to arrive at their conclusions. Nytro et al (2000) describe a range of processes at the organisational and interpersonal levels, which may be said to impede stress management interventions, but these processes are asserted, not discovered empirically.

1.7.3. Insufficient Evaluation

An impression from Table 1.1 is that attempts at evaluation may lack rigour. Out of seven studies at the organizational or organizational/individual level, one study (Beerman et al, 1999) provided a clear outcome from a tangible evaluation technique. Other studies did not measure stress outcomes or the outcomes were difficult to discern.

Newman and Beehr (1979) concluded that very few studies included an evaluation which was sufficiently direct and rigorous. The strategies used appeared to have face validity but they were based upon opinion and lacked empirical validation of their effectiveness.

Matteson et al (1987) concluded that: evaluative research of the use of

cognitive techniques in stress management is sparse; the rigour of the research evaluating the stress management effects for physical activity is of no better quality than for psycho-social intervention; control groups are generally absent; there is an over-reliance on subjective self reporting. There are too many studies showing a correlation but making no demonstration of cause and effect.

Nytro et al (2000) noted that there was insufficient emphasis on evaluation. It was not always possible to perceive exactly the content of an intervention or its implementation process.

Reynolds and Shapiro (1991) concluded that work-related stress interventions were not well designed, with insufficient evaluation, making effective stress reduction techniques difficult to identify.

Evaluation difficulties were reported by Matteson et al (1987) in a review of work-related stress interventions. The programmes reviewed included relaxation, biofeedback, cognitive techniques and exercise. It was concluded that: relaxation study measures were usually subjective and tended to rely too heavily upon self reports; intervention and control groups were not satisfactorily constructed; biofeedback research generally did not use controls. Many of the studies involving biofeedback contained other components such as behaviour modification, cognitive training plus conventional relaxation and meditation techniques. Therefore it could not be determined whether biofeedback was responsible for all of the changes, none of the changes, or some of the changes noted.

1.7.4. One Study in Detail

It may help to examine closely one study of work-related stress intervention, in

order to illustrate in detail, some of the design flaws found in this area of the literature. Whatmore, Cartwright and Cooper (1999) addressed work-related stress in a large, public sector organisation which had undergone a period of restructuring with major change initiatives introduced. Employees were described as having increased levels of uncertainty regarding career development, job practices and organisational systems. This paper was chosen for critique because the participants' employing organization bore similarities to this thesis: the local authority which employed the EPs in the Pilot Study and the teachers in the Main Study, could be described in similar terms.

Whatmore, Cartwright and Cooper (1999) carried out a stress intervention programme within a government department employing over 25,000 employees at various locations throughout the UK. Individual staff members were provided with a range of stress management training methods as follows: (1) education and awareness (2) exercise (3) cognitive restructuring. There was a separate group of participants for each of these three types of intervention, so that the efficacy of the interventions could be compared with each other. There were two types of control group: a waiting list control which became an experimental group at the three month point, and a conventional control group. Data was gathered at the three month point and the six month point. Outcomes were assessed at the individual level, using self-report measures of: anxiety, somatic anxiety, depression, mental health, physical health. At the organizational level outcomes were assessed by self-reports of sickness absenteeism and self-report measures of job satisfaction and "organizational commitment." (p. 156).

At the six month point the only significant improvements ($p<0.05$) were on: anxiety scores for the conventional control group; somatic anxiety scores for the exercise group and the waiting list controls (who had all received three months

of cognitive restructuring by the six month point); physical health in the exercise group. A broader range of successes occurred at the earlier, three month point.

Sickness absenteeism increased during the intervention period for all groups except the exercise group. No significant changes were found in levels of job satisfaction or organisational commitment for any group.

It would seem that the intervention could not be rated as successful. Possible reasons for this included the fact that all three types of intervention appear to be of short duration. It seems that participants in each of the three intervention groups were provided with a single training workshop at the start of the intervention. Whatmore et al (1999) acknowledged that the project was hindered by lack of contact with participants during the course of the programme.

Included in the conclusions is the comment, "Individually-targeted training can produce benefits within a short time span. However, for these benefits to be maintained, identification and minimisation of organisational stressors is required." (p.172). It may be difficult to discern why the authors chose to aim their programme at the individual level when they were apparently aware of the need to intervene at the organisational level and when critique of mis-direction has been available over an extended period (see section 1.7.2.).

The authors included measures of organization change such as absenteeism data, implying that they expected organizational change to follow intervention at the individual level. It may not be clear why such an assumption was held.

It appears that the occurrence of basic faults in the design of workplace development programmes is not confined to interventions in the field of stress management. Beer, Eisenstat and Spector (1988) noted that many programmes intended to help organisations to become more competitive, had either failed or

had limited success. They were pre-designed interventions, not aimed specifically at the organisations concerned, focusing on surface features rather than underlying causes.

1.8. An Apparent Contradiction

Design faults in workplace development programmes have persisted for reasons which may be difficult to establish. "The first puzzle is why do human beings produce, adhere to, and proliferate errors?" (Argyris, 1990, p,9). How can it be that well intentioned and well educated managers establish unsatisfactory working practices in the first instance, and what causes management to subsequently adopt such flawed attempts at improvements ? (Argyris, 1990). Further examination of the study by Whatmore et al (1999) may yield insights which help explain this situation.

It seems unclear why Whatmore et al (1999) targeted their training at the individual rather than the organisational level. The authors had carried out a stress audit which revealed primary stressors to be volume of work, reduction in staff numbers and coping with change. Senior management were apparently concerned to address issues of reported stress among employees and decreased job satisfaction, resulting from the changes in organisational climate. These issues would appear to indicate that interventions should be aimed at the organisational, rather than the personal level. However, when stress objectives were set by managers, they were set at the personal, not the organisational level. The objectives and intervention centred on helping individual employees to increase their understanding of stress and improve their stress coping skills.

The existence of basic design errors does not appear to be sufficient explanation for the outcome of this, and other interventions. It is a question of how errors, such as mis-direction, came to be included in this programme. The misdirection of intervention at the individual level could have been addressed, were there the will to do so. Somehow managers, moved from a stated position of willingness to launch a soundly based, organisational intervention, to a position, in practice, of initiating an intervention at the personal level. Managers appeared not to practice what they preached.

There is a need to explain an apparent contradiction between managers' apparent readiness to address work-related stress, but mis-directing interventions at the individual, which would seem to make a successful organizational or work-related outcome unlikely. It may help to consider some of the psychological processes which might be involved.

1.9. Differing Perceptions and Beliefs

Managers and staff do not appear to have a shared view on issues which seem related to the process of managing work-related stress. Nytro et al (2000) illustrate some of the differing perceptions of managers and staff which may impede change when a stress programme is initiated: (a) "participation or collective employee voice in the change process." (p.218). This refers to non-participation of staff in a stress programme, owing to factors such as staff's misunderstanding and mistrust of managers, staff holding unstated assumptions which oppose change, fatigue caused by repeated exposure to change from a succession of managers, resentment about managers' seeking to control change. "If, at the outset, project managers seek to gain unilateral control over

the change project and at the same time espouse participation and involvement, a likely reaction will be polite silence and passive resistance." (p.219). (b) "unresolved anxieties, passive sabotage and non-intended subversion." (p.219). This refers to unwillingness to relinquish old practices, reverting to old practices and insufficient trust in managers necessary for staff to develop new ways of working. (c) "readiness for change." (p.221). This refers to whether staff see the need for the change suggested by managers and whether they see the proposed intervention as suitable to address the identified problem. (d) "defining roles and responsibilities " (p. 220). This refers to the tendency of ad hoc groups such as working parties to be responsible for development programmes, when staff may prefer that roles such as expert, advocate and enabler/facilitator are clearly defined at the outset.

It may help to take a broader view and consider any manager-staff differences within belief systems which may be related to the process of stress management.

1.9.1. Trust in the Workplace

The wider literature has noted that trust is an issue in the efficient functioning of organizations. Beer, Eisenstat and Spector, (1988) examined established working practices in six large corporations. They found that managers and workers were out of touch with customer needs, lower level employees were not fully informed and there were low levels of trust between staff and managers. There is a case for developing trust within organizations, in order to foster a sense of autonomy in individual members of staff which, in the long term, will benefit organizational growth (Porter, Lawler, & Hackman, 1975).

Managers' perception may be that communications to them from staff, about the risks to the organisation of stress, must meet specific criteria if the communication is to be trusted. These criteria include the staff member being perceived as having no vested interests and being concerned with, and attending to, the concerns of management (Daniels, 1996). This would appear to be a vicious circle where communication is not received because of perception of vested interest, but communication is needed in order for a perception of vested interest to be dispelled. Trust is a two way process and managers may need assistance with its development in the workplace.

Trust may be difficult to define, but an absence of trust between managers and staff may give rise to anxiety, leading to disrupted workplace relationships and even aggression (Nytro et al, 2000). In such an atmosphere, staff are unlikely to feel that they can confide in managers about stress, decreasing the likelihood that their concerns about stress will be accurately targeted during any stress programme.

The essential co-operation between managers and staff required for the success of a stress management programme, is unlikely to be generated if there is a lack of trust between them, and if they do not believe each others' views on work-related stress to be trustworthy.

1.9.2. Staff's Sense of Justice

It has been observed that consultants, managers and others who wish to effect organisational change seem to struggle to do so. This may be explained in terms of staff's need to experience "organisational justice." (Novelli et al, 1995) pp.16 & 18). Effective reduction in work-related stress is not simply a matter of

articulating a clear vision and involving staff in a desired outcome. A simple sequence of change events, with staff involvement at each stage, is not enough; it is crucial that each staff member perceives him/herself as having been treated fairly by management.

Adams (1963) theory of equity is located in a workplace context by Taris et al (2002). People compare themselves to others in similar occupations in order to decide upon a point of balance between their investments in, and rewards gained from their work. Disturbance of this balance is expected to result in negative outcomes even when people are comparatively well paid.

The proportion of staff who feel they are treated unfairly at work may be high. Taris et al (2002) found that up to 85% of their sample felt disadvantaged in the workplace, reporting elevated levels of emotional exhaustion, cynicism and health complaints. None of these factors would appear to be conducive to staff co-operation in a manager-initiated stress management programme.

Geurts et al (1999) assert that staff have a need to be treated fairly and may otherwise experience an emotional state of resentment leading to poor commitment to organisational goals (p.262). Truchot et al (2001) have related perceived inequity to emotional exhaustion or burnout, which seems likely to undermine staff's co-operation with any suggested stress intervention.

1.9.3. Staff's Sense of Control

According to Spector (1998) there are several types of control which pertain to the workplace. Behavioural control is described as the control the individual has over immediate issues such as prioritising tasks, and overall matters such as decision making. Environmental control is the degree of choice an individual is

given by managers or by the work situation itself. Perceived control is the amount of choice which an individual perceives he/she has. Perceived control is said to operate between environmental and perceived job stressors. When perceived control is high, environmental conditions are less likely to be perceived as stressors. Perceived control is usually seen as having "....buffering effects on the perception of stressors...." (p.158).

The importance of staff having a perception that they can control or somehow influence the workplace demands placed upon them has been identified by others including Tattersall et al (1995) Jimmieson, (2000) Troup et al (2002).

When managers seek to gain control over a stress intervention (Nytro et al, 2000) this may be stress inducing for staff, militating against any benefits emerging from a stress reduction programme.

Perceived control is usually seen as ameliorating a sense of stress (Palmer, Cooper & Thomas, 2001; Spector, 1998). When staff perceive that they are treated unfairly this may lead to stress (Truchot & Deregard, 2001). Managers may not always appreciate that issues such as control and justice are related to stress.

1.9.4. Managers' Will to Act on Stress

The responsibility for dealing with work-related stress rests with managers who are expected to deal with stress in their staff (HSE, 1995). This need not imply that managers have sufficient knowledge of stress, an understanding of its effects in human terms and an appreciation of its cost implications. Managers may acknowledge their statutory responsibilities for stress under the Health and

Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and act simply out of a sense of obligation rather than a wish to meet the needs of stressed staff.

Managers may lack the will to act on stress (Cooper, Cooper & Eaker, 1988) Senior managers may underestimate the risks associated with stress and consider stress management to be inappropriate, believing that individuals, not organisations should be responsible for coping with stress (Daniels, 1996). Manager–staff communication on stress and the creation of stress programmes, could be perfunctory and be perceived by staff as tokenism.

The Mental Health Foundation (MHF, 2001) reporting the views of managers, found that stress is seen as an over-used word. Some managers do not believe that the cost of stress is as high as it is claimed to be. Managers may feel responsible for dealing with work-related stress, but the are clearly work focused and they may not be inclined to address a potential mix of personal and work-related stress. Managers may not be clear how to deal with stress.

The CBI (1999) indicates that employers are increasingly aware of the impact of stress on staff and acknowledges that policies to deal with stress can help employers reduce absence problems and cut costs. On the other hand CBI (2002) states that much, work-related stress is caused by external factors, beyond the responsibility of the employer.

There is an assertion by employers that stress is beneficial, in that it can enhance performance at work (CBI, 2002). This may be based on the confusion in terminology referred to in Section 1.2.1., arising from the early use of the term strain as an internal event and stress or pressure as external events. It may clarify to use the term pressure as an external event, leading to an internal response of the individual being under strain. The individual may respond with enhanced performance in order to reduce the inner sense of strain. The term

stress, used in this thesis to denote an internal event, refers to the individual experiencing a relatively high level of internal strain to the point of starting to break down. Pressure may be motivating and, therefore, considered beneficial but stress, by definition, is not beneficial.

There may be some underlying processes implied in a "them and us" attitude to work-related stress. Staff and trades unions may advocate action, whilst employers and managers can seem reluctant to acknowledge the full extent of the problem, with a reduced will to act.

The MHF (2001) reported a view that senior employees in an organisation experience less stress than others. Different manager-staff experiences of stress could imply a lack of manager awareness about staff stress and lack of empathy on staff stress-related issues. If managers' stress coping were relatively high compared to staff, this may make managers unfamiliar with stress and find it difficult or embarrassing as a subject to discuss with staff. Relatively low levels of manager stress could lead to managers having a mistaken impression that employee stress is correspondingly low. Alternatively a higher level of manager stress could leave managers too exhausted to help their staff with stress.

Communication is a two way process between managers and staff, but there may be a tendency in the work-related stress literature to tilt the balance towards staff's perceptions of work-related stress. More understanding is required about how managers perceive the risks of stress, how managers' perceptions differ from the perceptions of other stakeholders and whether managers take into account information available from stress literature (Daniels, 1996).

When managers lack a will to act on stress they may refrain from becoming personally involved in stress programmes and delegate to an ad hoc group or working party, with resulting frustration and possible resentment in staff (Nytro et al, 2000).

Beliefs and values might be shared, with a greater degree of correspondence between managers' and staff's perceptions, if communication between managers and staff were effective.

1.10. Communication between Managers and Staff

It may help to examine some of the communication processes between managers and staff. If managers were better able to communicate, and enlist their staff's co-operation, more effective interventions could be developed.

Formal communication is initiated by managers, for example, through routine meetings and written documentation. Nytro et al (2000) describe a group of components referred to as "informal socio-cognitive processes" (p.219). These are interpersonal communication processes, operating informally within staff groups and between manager and staff groups. They often have a negative influence and may constitute a "language barrier" (p.219) between managers and staff.

Managers and staff may be at cross purposes. Managers may have high expectations about the success of an intervention, "....while ignoring the needs for communication...." There are difficulties experienced by managers in transcending their own perceptions and achieving an adequate grasp of norms, values and "....use of language" of their staff (Nytro et at, 2000, p.219).

Nytro et at (2000) claim that, "Well-designed dissemination of information is a necessary but not sufficient prerequisite for successful change projects." (p.219). Managers and staff also hold "....assumptions (which are) seldom stated openly and can act as effective barriers to accepting the initial arguments behind the change efforts, hindering the progress of change." (p.219).

Managers focus on issues which connect with strategic goals of the organization, whilst staff value factors which are practical, emotional and related to the here and now (Argyris, 1990). For example managers might wish to consult staff on a re-organization plan to combine education and social services into a new department of children's services. Managers may be keen to rearrange the allocation of office desk space in order to group staff together in their new, multi-professional teams. Staff may have a need to discuss how the plan will affect their working hours, access to files and photocopiers, relocation to another office building, implications on car parking and so on. This communication mismatch between managers and staff is not always made explicit. For example, managers may be unlikely to say to staff that discussions are at cross purposes and clarification is needed from both sides.

Managers' perceptions of their staff may differ from the perception held by the individual staff members themselves. An employee may perceive him/herself to be a good worker and indispensable to the organisation. The manager may perceive the same individual as a poor employee and barely acceptable to the organisation (Martin,1998).

Interactions between managers and staff in stress programmes do not appear to be straightforward. Within organisations, there are formal meetings and official communications in writing, but significant interactions between managers and staff and amongst staff, make take place informally, with the

outcome not under the direct influence of the manager, or not as the manager intended. This may not be conducive to managers' learning more about staff stress or fostering staff participation in stress management interventions.

1.11. Summary: differing manager-staff views

Part of the problem in implementing successful stress programmes seems to be that managers and staff appear to hold different views on issues which seem related to work-related stress and the process of stress management. Another part of the problem seems to be difficulties in communication between managers and staff, in particular informal manager–staff communication (Nytro et al, 2000). If managers and staff were better able to communicate more effective interventions could be developed.

Lack of an agreed view between managers and staff, on work-related stress and stress management, may explain mis-direction of interventions at the individual, as opposed to the organizational level. Managers' not seeing the 'real' causes of stress could lead to their aiming interventions at the wrong targets.

1.12. Models of Work-Related Stress

It has been possible to arrive at a concise definition of what is meant by work-related stress, distinguishing it from personal stress (see section 1.4.). This provided a useful reference point in Studies 1 and 2, where definitions of stress were discussed. What was additionally needed was something more complex; a theory or model of stress which might inform on the content or structure of

stress management programmes in order to explain why so few stress programmes have been effective; why design errors such as misdirection have persisted over time.

Cooper, Cooper and Eaker (1988) put forward the notion that each individual has her/his own "range of stability" (pp. 11-12) within which s/he feels comfortable. When external forces disrupt this stability, stress results from a perceived mismatch between the individual and her/his particular environment. The range of stability and consequent mismatch are different for each individual and the individual acts (or transacts) to restore feelings of comfort and maintain a steady state.

This model seems to be a similar to the basic transactional definition or model, referred to in Section 1.2.1. In order for a model to apply to work-related stress, it must be an organisational model and this appears to be a personal model, referring to individuals, rather than organizational systems.

Cummings and Cooper (1998) refer back to Cannon's work (1932) introducing the idea of a homeostatic process, operating to maintain an organism in equilibrium. Cannon's (1932) position described a simple, biological reflex system. Cybernetic theory takes a step beyond this, emphasising time, information and feedback in a prolonged sequence of events, mediated by cognition. Cummings and Cooper (1998) draw upon the theory of cybernetics, or systems control, to provide a model or theory of occupational stress. They briefly describe cybernetics as concerned with the use of information and feedback to control purposeful behaviour. Specifically, this feedback allows the organism to change behaviour in order to reduce deviations from a specified goal. This adaptation of cybernetic theory, introducing feedback, purposeful

behaviour, goal and the concept of controlling a system, rather than an individual, may claim to be more organizational than personal.

Cummings and Cooper (1998) claim that this model provides a framework for alleviation of organizational stress, suggesting that, "This feedback-change process seeks to improve the organization continually. It involves employees directly in the process to gain their valuable input and commitment to change." (p.119).

Involvement of staff does not necessarily mean that reliable and accurate information will emerge and that commitment to change will follow (Novelli et al, 1995). For communication to be effective, staff need to be willing to co-operate, overcoming any tendency to passive resistance and subversion (Nytro et al, 2000). When staff speak frankly about their sources of stress, managers need to listen, although they may have a tendency to be defensive (Argyris, 1990).

Palmer, Cooper and Thomas (2001) have formulated a model of stress, triggered by the publication of an HSE (2001a) document, which provides guidance for managers on a structured approach to work-related stress, involving stress risk assessment and a "framework for intervention." (p.378). This HSE (2001a) document above, did not include a model of stress, hence Palmer et al (2001) stating a need to provide one.

Scrutiny of the diagrammatic representation of the model shows: potential hazards, from the point of view of the employee, arising from the demands of the job, culture of the workplace, control, support and so on; the individual's symptoms such as irritability and disturbed sleep, followed by illnesses such as heart disease; organisational symptoms, including increased sickness absence and staff turnover, leading to outcomes such as reduced profits. These factors in combination ultimately result in financial costs to the organization.

Palmer et al (2001) state that their model, "....can be used to educate or inform employees, personnel and health professionals about the relationship between potential work-related stress hazards, individual and organisational symptoms of stress, negative outcomes and financial costs." (p.378). Whilst the model may educate and inform, education and information are not, per se, intervention.

Palmer et al (2001) provide a model of how stress is created, but a mechanism for alleviating stress is not included. There appears to be little information offered to inform stress interventions. Managers might be forgiven for viewing this model as common sense rather than the outcome of research. It appears to be a set of assertions for which no evidence is provided. A suitable model might start from an evidence base, contain interacting components, leading to outcomes which increase insight and understanding and inform intervention, rather than simply describing how stress arises.

Within a simple structure, models of occupational stress can acquire a considerable amount of detail. A diagram of preventative strategies and indicators (Quick, Quick & Nelson, 1998) shows 50 interacting components. These authors provide an alternative, less complicated, preventative stress management model plus hypotheses, containing 22 interacting factors.

It seems preferable that a model of organizational stress have the capacity to engage the interest of managers, as those responsible for attempting to alleviate work-related stress, when those managers may themselves be stressed, tired and left with little motivation to improve the well-being of their staff. Managers' motivation may be not be enhanced when they are confronted with such detail.

It may be difficult to arrive at a model of stress which is both acceptable to

managers and psychologically based. Managers tend to adopt a stance which may not be entirely compatible with a psychological model of stress. Managers may request a model of stress which allows stress to be defined and measured with agreed tolerance limits set (MHF, 2001). Whilst this position seems reasonable, it may imply operation at the individual, rather than organisational level and be located more appropriately within a medical model. Stress has some biological components, but its additional psychological components would seem to require a psychological model. When stress cannot be reduced to simple elements within a logical framework of causality and objective measurement (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Lowe, 1996) managers may appear sceptical, feeling that the case for the viability of the term, stress remains unproven.

There have been difficulties in arriving at a model of work-related stress which is organizational rather than personal, which is psychological rather than medical and which is sufficiently pragmatic to gain the attention of busy, possibly stressed managers, who may not wish to absorb a large amount of detail.

Models referred to in this section attempted set out the process by which work-related stress is created. They appear not to inform on the content or structure of stress management programmes in order to explain why so few stress programmes have been effective; why design errors such as misdirection have persisted over time.

1.13. An Alternative Model Applied to Work-Related Stress

Briner and Reynolds (1993) are strongly critical of existing theories and models of stress. It is suggested that existing models of occupational stress need to be abandoned and their mythical status acknowledged. This thesis is broadly concerned with attempting to explain why most published, work-related stress programmes appear to be ineffective in reducing stress. In order to identify an explanatory framework it may be necessary to look beyond theories of work-related stress.

There is an apparent contradiction in managers' seeming willingness to launch stress programmes, whilst mis-directing them at the individual, rather than at organizational factors which may be creating stress. A possible explanation emerges from the literature reviewed earlier, indicating that managers and staff perceive stress differently; managers do not see the real causes of staff stress and so misdirect interventions. However the apparent contradiction in the behaviour of managers may be more complex than a misunderstanding of the causes of stress and consequent mis-direction of action to resolve it. Explanations about contradictions in manager behaviour and managers' repetition of errors, or mis-directions of effort, may emerge from the field of organizational learning.

1.13.1. Espoused Theory versus Theory-in-Use

This paradox in the behaviour of managers has been noted by Argyris (1990) who asserts that, "Managements, at all levels, in many organisations, create, by

their own choice, a world that is contrary to what they say they prefer and contrary to the managerial stewardship they espouse." (p.10).

According to Argyris (1990) managers' misdirection of stress interventions does not arise from 'genuinely' striving, but failing to see the causes of staff's stress. Misdirection appears to stem from contradictions within managers themselves, within their own mental set. Managers hold "espoused theories" (p.13) which comprise their "beliefs and values" (p.13) such as "caring, support, honesty and integrity." (p.12). However, there is a distinction between a manager's espoused or stated position and his/her actions practice.

Argyris and Schon (1974) develop their ideas as follows. All human beings, in a workplace context or otherwise, need to become competent in taking action and simultaneously reflecting on this action in order to learn from it. In order to do so, people have "theories of action" (p.4). Such theories are not complex, scientific theories, they are," practical, common-sense theories" (p.4). A theory does not have to stand up to rigorous examination, ".....it is only a set of interconnected propositions that have the same referent – the subject of a theory." (p.4).

Theories of action are divided into two types in a dichotomy which may be described as: "When someone is asked how he would behave under certain circumstances, the answer he usually gives is his espoused theory of action. This is the theory of action to which he gives allegiance, and which, upon request, he communicates to others. However, the theory that actually governs his actions is his theory-in-use, which may or may not be compatible with his espoused theory; furthermore, the individual may or may not be aware of the incompatibility of the two theories." (Argyris & Schon, 1974, pp. 6-7). There is a

distinction between what people actually do, governed by their theory-in-use as opposed to what they say they do, their espoused theory.

A question arises about why individuals might need to generate a theory-in-use. Why do theories of action become split between one theory for what people say they do (espoused theory) and another for what they do in practice (theory-in-use)?

Argyris and Schon (1974) explain the need for this division using the concept of "governing variable" (p.15). Each individual is interested in specific governing variables such as energy expended, containing anxiety or time spent with other people. We need to maintain the intensity of such variables as a constant or, ".....keep the values of these variables within the range acceptable to us..." (p.15). Managers may state a public view on work-related stress (espoused theory) but they are also driven by a possibly incompatible need to keep their inner world fairly consistent or constant. A separate theory must be generated to fulfil the latter purpose: "Theories-in-use maintain a person's field of constancy." (p.16).

1.13.2. Control and Defensiveness

The need to keep our inner world in a constant state is rooted in our childhood (Argyris, 1990). People acquire ".... social virtues that we are taught early in life" (Argyris,1990, p.23) which, in adult life, give rise to a child-like intolerance of embarrassment or threat. When managers face embarrassment or threat, the constant state of their inner world is threatened. They perceive this as leading to a loss of control, but "They abhor feeling or being out of control." (Argyris,1990,

p.12). People need a theory in use which will enable them to produce intended consequences and maintain control.

Argyris (1990) takes the view that socially uncomfortable issues in the workplace need to be addressed by managers in order for the organization to progress and develop, but managers steer away from doing so, as part of a tendency to avoid embarrassment. Managers seek, ".....to be in unilateral control, to win, and (at the same time) not to upset people." (Argyris, 1990, p.13).

Control-maintaining behaviours lead to defensive actions. According to Argyris (1990) managers' appraisal of workplace issues, such as work-related stress, and their capacity to address these issues effectively, is distorted by their own "defensive reasoning" (p.10). Managers may espouse a caring approach, with a stated willingness to address work-related stress, when, in practice, they are acting in a defensive way, with the intention of keeping their inner world in a constant state. A tendency to avoid important but embarrassing issues produces "....errors.....which violate the principles of sound management." (p.6).

1.13.3. Errors

Errors listed by Argyris (1990) include: (a) managers' actions, "intended to increase understanding and trust, often produce misunderstanding and mistrust" (p.6); (b) managers do not accept responsibility for important errors and resort to, "Blaming others or the system for poor decisions." (p.7); (c) existing methods are allowed to continue and, "The tried and proven ways of

doing things dominate organizational life" (p.7); (d) managers ".....do not behave reasonably when they are faced with facts that are upsetting." (p.9).

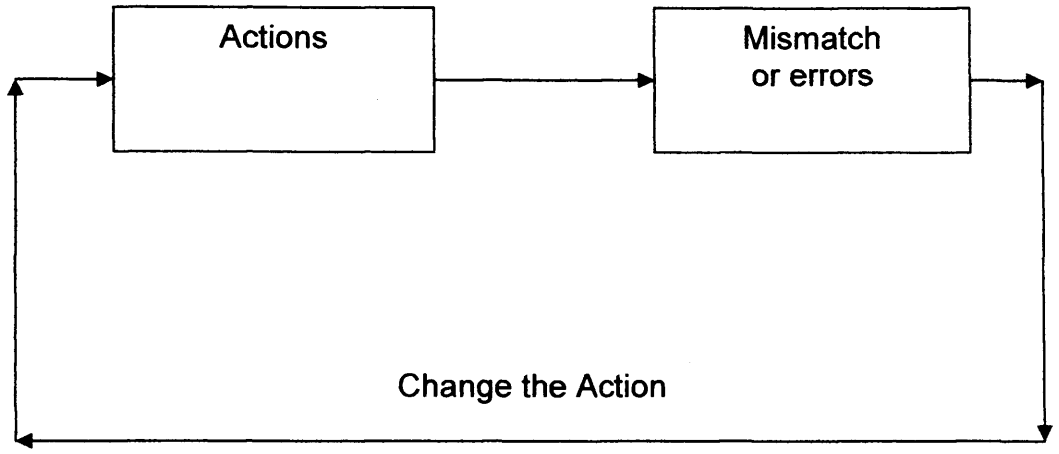
Errors, arising from manager defensiveness, are automatic and spontaneous; managers, ".... are often unaware they are acting counterproductively." (p.21). Managers, "Repeat errors skilfully so they can continue to be repeated." (p.23). "It is as if they [managers] are compulsively tied to a set of processes that prevent them from changing what they believe they should change." (p.10).

If a manager's theory-in-use involves containing anxiety as a governing variable, he/she learns how to act in a way which keeps his/her world fairly constant, by maintaining anxieties within familiar limits. When managers design stress management programmes, containing manager anxiety may be one of the aims, thus mis-directing the intervention away from staff stress.

1.13.4. Model I or Single Loop Learning

In "single loop learning" or "Model I" (p.19) we adopt a limited form of learning, which allows our errors to continue. In Model I we learn to maintain our field of constancy by learning to design actions which maintain our governing values or variables within our expected limits. The governing values of Model I are described as, "..... to be in unilateral control, to win and not lose, and to suppress negative feelings." Model I contains "action strategies" which include "...to advocate, persuade, sell, and use face saving devices [which] lead to organizational routines." (Argyris, 1990, p.25).

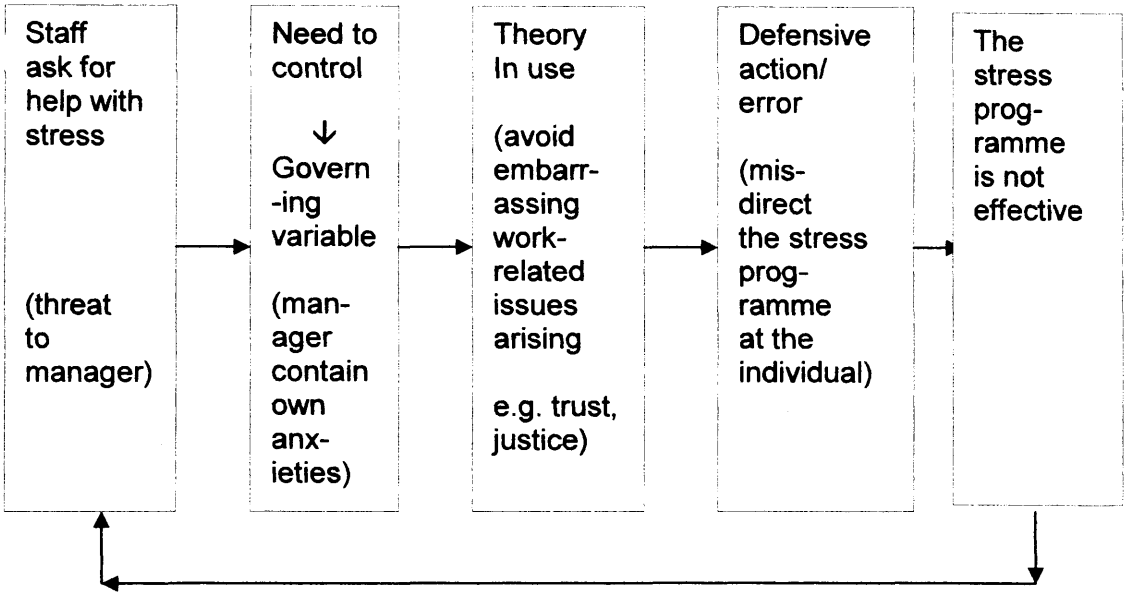
Figure 1.1. Model I or single-loop learning



Source: Argyris, 1990, p.92

Managers' espoused theory may be to reduce work-related stress, but the existence of work-related stress may be embarrassing for managers. According to Model I, managers would repeat the error of implementing interventions misdirected at the individual. The problems of work-related stress would not be clearly addressed, and in keeping difficulties masked, embarrassment is spared. Managers' espoused theory may be the reduction of staff stress, but managers' theory-in-use might be the avoidance of their own embarrassment.

Figure 1.2. Model I learning and work-related stress

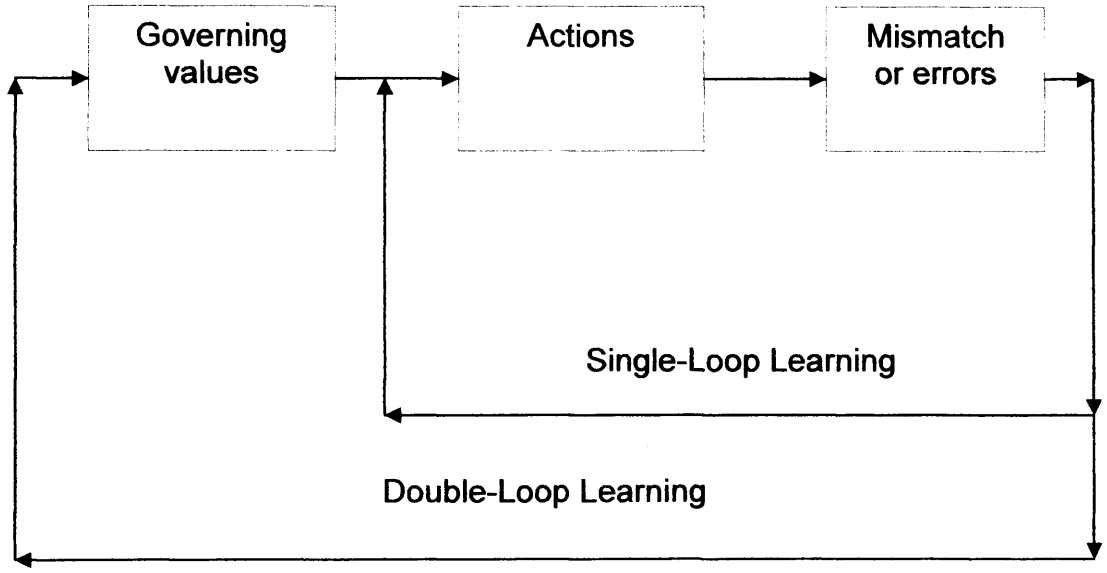


When managers seek to maintain control, but not upset people, issues are not properly explored. When managers follow single loop learning, errors are repeated and stress interventions continue to be misdirected as shown in Figure 1.2.

1.13.5. Model II or Double Loop Learning

For managers to change their behaviour, significant attitude change is required on their part. Errors are likely to be repeated until a "Model II" approach is adopted (Argyris, 1990, p.104). This involves "productive reasoning" (p.105) rather than the defensive reasoning referred to earlier.

Figure 1.3. Model II or double-loop learning



Source: Argyris,1990, p.94

In double-loop learning managers move out of their field of constancy and change their governing variables. A step is taken, ".....to re-educate the players to take Model II from an espoused theory to a theory-in-use." (Argyris, 1990, p.95).

Within Model II, instead of defending against embarrassment, managers reflect on their own thoughts and feelings and consider any attributions (untested ideas about causes) they may be making. Rather than aiming to appear caring, in an over-protective way that does not trust in staff's capacity to state their own needs and handle problems, individuals are viewed as

responsible for their decisions. Managers take the initiative by being open in their attributions and using constructive confrontation whilst encouraging others to do the same.

1.13.6. Field of Constancy: explaining manager-staff differing views

A person's field of constancy is made up of several components. (a) A set of governing variables such as energy expended, anxiety, time spent with other people and so on. (b) The range of these variables; existing variables are maintained within acceptable limits; new variables, which may be above or below these limits, are, in time, brought within them; these limits are those which the individual expects to experience in order to perceive his/her world as operating in an acceptably constant state. (c) Some variables have priority over others; priority is decided by the theory-in-use. (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Argyris, 1990).

Managers and staff are likely to have different governing variables, priorities and so on, therefore each will have a different field of constancy. When managers and staff have differing views, for example, on whether a work-related issue is perceived as stressful, discrepancies may follow from the issue impinging on the field of constancy of say, the staff member but not the manager. For example, a given issue may involve more time spent by staff compared to managers, or may demand a higher priority from managers compared to staff (see section 3.5.1.1.).

When a given work-related issue demands more time or allocation of higher priority, there is a tendency to move the individual outside his or her field of constancy. This may lead to a sense of loss of control, which has, in turn, been

linked to stress (Jimmieson, 2000; Palmer, Cooper & Thomas, 2001; Tattersall & Farmer, 1995; Troup & Dewe, 2002).

1.14. A Critique of Argyris

The work of Argyris has been applied across a wide range of organizations in the commercial sector and also in educational settings (Robinson, 1993). In devising his theory, Argyris is concerned with how organizations develop, learn and "achieve organizational excellence" (Argyris, 1990, p.xi). There is a focus on organizations becoming more productive and competitive, increasing quality and decreasing costs, whilst attempting to safeguard morale, satisfaction and loyalty in their staff. (This terminology may have originated in industry and commerce, but it seems to have become increasingly familiar in schools and local authorities). Argyris' aims, described in terms of identifying where the organization is going wrong, achieving excellence and so on, are rather broad. They might benefit from clearer definition.

Argyris may be criticised for placing too much responsibility with managers for errors, or mistaken attempts at improvement in the workplace, at the expense of ignoring defensive behaviour in staff. The wider literature describes some of the subtle features of staff behaviour.

Martin (1998) cites findings which emerged from the "Hawthorne" studies (p.178) carried out in 1924. Within formally designated groupings of staff, informal groups will form. These informal groups do not always relate to the formal groupings; informal groups will attempt a form of bottom-up management in order to influence their working environment; an individual may value the benefits of belonging to the informal group more than any benefit obtained from

managers; informal staff groups may seek to frustrate management's interventions and objectives; managers have little or no influence on the membership of informal groups; informal staff groups have a significant effect on behaviour and attitudes towards work; informal groups can engage in competitive activities that are against the interests of the organisation as a whole; first line or middle managers and supervisors are pressurised into conflicting affiliations from below and above; individual staff members are not simply motivated by pay and tangible benefits (Martin, 1998).

Such factors can operate informally, leading to staff having a disruptive effect on an organisation and its attempts to initiate change. In placing emphasis on manager defensiveness, Argyris may be failing to take into account some of the additional interactions involved.

There may be a need to take into account the complexities of the individual manager operating in an organizational context, that is to say, within a system (Bertalanffy, 1968). It may help to show some insight into ways in which the system acts on managers to create stress and, in turn, the effects of stress on the behaviour of managers. Dealing with manager stress may be a pre-requisite in any programme of organizational change.

Argyris claims that his theory is a theory of organizational, as opposed to individual learning. This seems to be a reasonable claim in that the interactions between managers and staff are encompassed. However an organizational theory might benefit from a wider inclusion of interacting components within a system.

Argyris' (1990) contentions about defensiveness and control appear to be based on assertions from the psychology of individuals, and the effect of childhood influences on personality in adult life. The notion of defensiveness

may need a clearer description or definition. Use of the term defensiveness or defensive action, may be similar to the concept of defence against conflict, as a means of protecting the ego (Freud & Breuer, 1893-5). It is difficult to discern clear links with the literature from which this concept seems to originate; there seems to be an assumption that author is in agreement with his readers on what is meant by the term, defensiveness.

An acknowledgement of some of the psychotherapeutic or psychoanalytical roots of defensive behaviour might include an expansion of the inter-related components of childhood experience, threat, embarrassment, control and defensiveness. Defensiveness as referred to by Argyris (1990) appears to take the form of avoidance in the form of a tendency to avoid important but embarrassing issues. Some explanation may be needed about why other manifestations of defensiveness are not included such as passivity, impulsivity, dissociation or regression (Blackman, 2004).

Some fundamental Freudian assumptions have been questioned or abandoned over time, but psychoanalysis may still be helpful in reflecting on how we become the people we are (Thomas, 1996). The concept of defence or defences may continue to have wide applicability, as a set of mental operations that restore or maintain a sense of balance by removing unpleasant emotions from conscious awareness (Blackman, 2004). Nevertheless psychodynamic or psychoanalytical concepts originate in the consulting room and may not be commonly found within academic psychology. Argyris may have considered them too remote to be included in the definition of his concepts.

Some readers may take the view that there is an emotive tone in comments such as: "This book takes direct aim at organizational defenses." (Argyris, 1990, p.xi); "To dramatize a bit...." (Argyris, 1990, p.3). Some of the terminology used

by Argyris (1990) might create difficulty for the reader, for example, his use of the term, "fancy footwork" (p.46). This term is defined as, ".....to use all the defensive reasoning and actions at their command in order to continue the distancing and blindness [to their own inconsistencies] without holding themselves responsible for doing so." (p.46). This wording seems emotive and the introduction of the term, fancy footwork, may have little explanatory value. It appears to be a collective term for a sequence of defensive actions.

1.15. Literature Summary

Work-related stress amongst teachers and other occupational groups, is a significant problem in its prevalence, costs and effects. This thesis was concerned with why many work-related stress programmes, which managers provide, appear to have little effect in assisting staff to reduce their stress.

Managers show an apparent readiness to manage the work-related stress in their staff, but lack of an agreed view between managers and staff, on work-related stress and stress management, may explain mis-direction of interventions at the individual, as opposed to the organizational level. Managers' not seeing the 'real' causes of stress could lead to their aiming interventions at the wrong targets, with resulting ineffectiveness of stress programmes (see sections 1.8. to 1.11). Manager-staff communication is such that a mismatch in perceptions between managers and staff is not easily addressed.

Once a manager has noted that a stress programme has been misdirected, the correction of that error would seem to be a straight forward matter, were there the will to do so. An explanation was needed about why such errors tend

to be repeated, in published stress programmes, over an extended period of time. Theories of organizational stress appeared to be of limited help in addressing this question.

There may be an alternative explanation for the apparent contradiction between managers' apparent readiness to reduce staff stress and their mis-direction of effort. Rather than managers not accurately perceiving staff stress, and 'genuinely' misdirecting stress programmes, misdirection may stem from a dichotomy within managers themselves. Managers may have an espoused theory of helping and supporting staff, but in practice, managers seem defensive and possibly anxious that a stress programme might create embarrassment in revealing the real causes of work-related stress. Managers have a theory-in-use which aims a stress programme at avoiding any such embarrassment. In other words, the programme is mis-directed; it is aimed away from staff's work-related stress, at individual stress. As a consequence workplace stress interventions are likely to be ineffective at reducing work-related stress (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Argyris, 1990).

The error of mis-direction is repeated over an extended period of time because managers' needing to control, and governing variables, such as managers' containing their own anxieties, continue to apply. Such variables result in a superficial form of learning, Model I learning, which involves the repetition of error (see Figure 1.2). (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Argyris, 1990).

Studies are not evaluated (see section 1.7.3.) because of the need to avoid embarrassment at revealing that an attempted reduction of stress was less than successful.

1.16. Implications for EPs

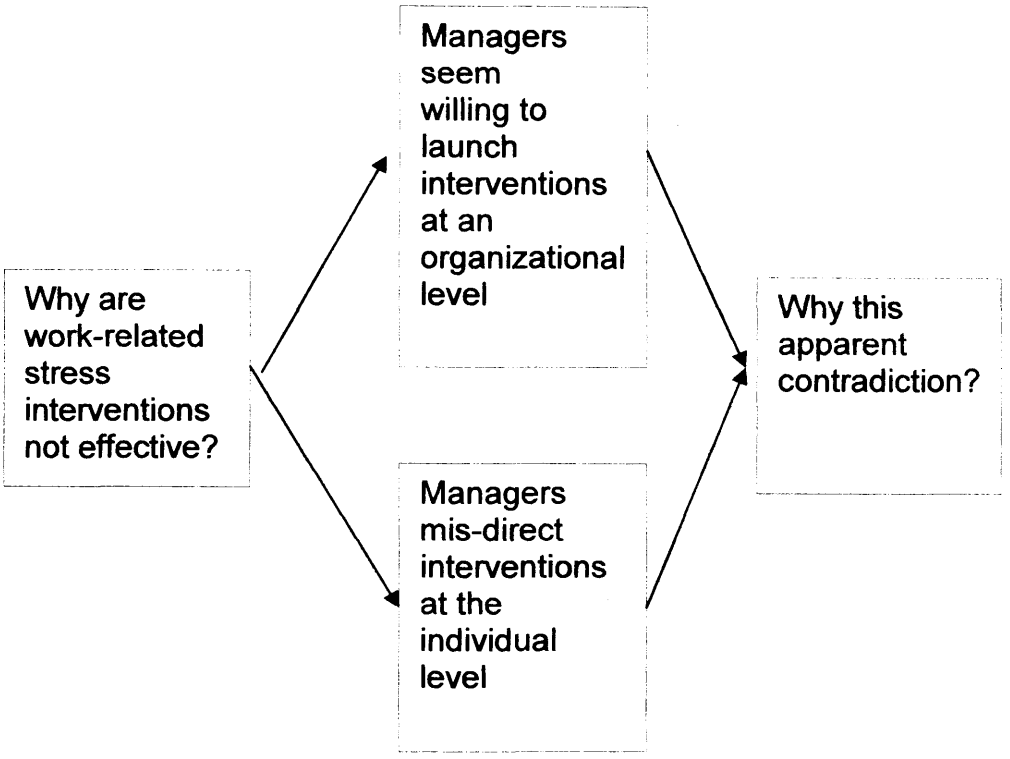
There may be implications for EP services, when EPs and their managers have differing perceptions on causes of work-related stress. This might lead to an EP manager leaving stress issues unaddressed, with implications for the efficient functioning of EP services.

When EPs provide schools with training on dealing with work related stress, the invitation to do so is likely to have come from the teacher managers, the head and senior management team in the school. It may be that the head has assumed that her/his reasons for inviting stress management input, are likely to be seen and understood by staff, or that the head's suggestions on areas to target for stress reduction are similar to those which staff would put forward. The EP, as trainer, needs to adjust to the possibility that this may not be the case.

1.17. Purpose of Studies 1 and 2

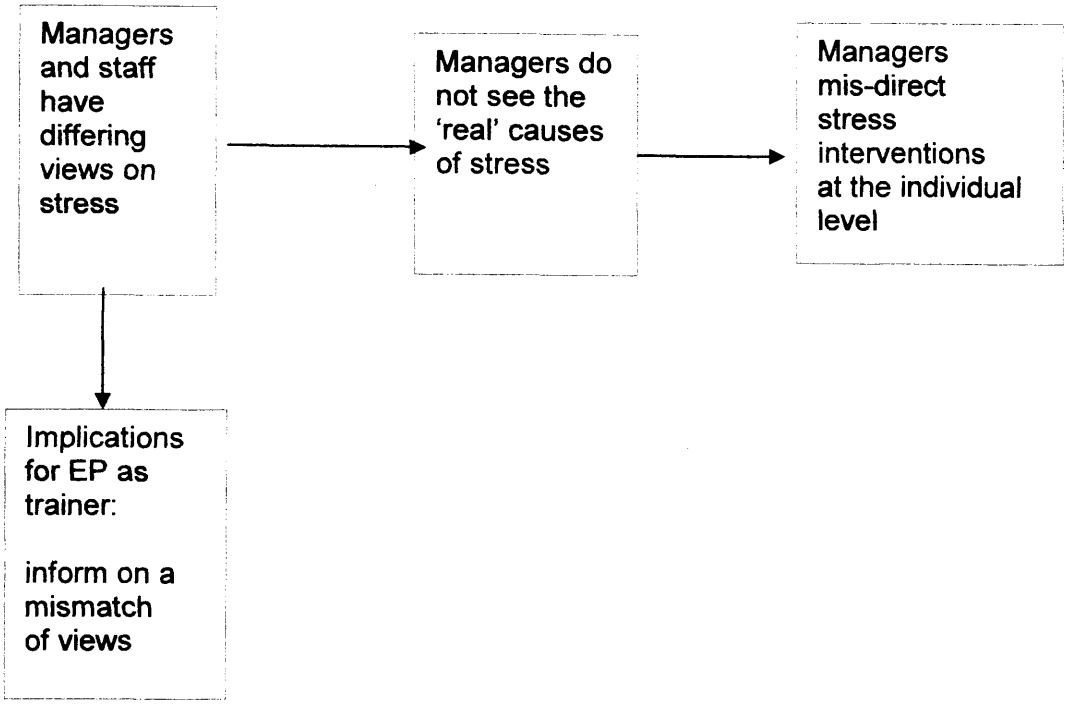
The purpose of Studies 1 and 2 was to explore the apparent contradiction shown in Figure 1.4.

Figure 1.4. An apparent contradiction



The logical conclusion from the literature reviewed is that the above contradiction is explained by managers' not seeing the real causes of staff stress. The issue for investigation, therefore, was whether managers and staff differed in their views on work-related stress, as shown in Figure 1.5.

Figure 1.5. Differing views and mis-direction



If managers and staff held differing views on work-related stress, it was possible that any differences could be confirmed by direct observation of their talk. The Main Study therefore set out to examine the talk of teachers and teacher managers in a primary school and establish whether they had differing views on work-related stress and, if so, in what ways were they different?

Before the Main Study could begin, there was a need for a pilot study to determine whether an investigation of this type was feasible and whether managers and staff were willing to undertake a substantial dialogue about work-related stress and whether their talk could be recorded, transcribed and analysed. The Pilot Study provided an opportunity to trial interviewing techniques, procedure, methods and so on, in order to develop and refine these as far as possible with the prospect of enhancing the credibility of data subsequently gathered in the Main Study.

CHAPTER 2

PILOT STUDY

2.1. Rationale and Aims

It could not be assumed that managers and staff would talk freely about work-related stress, when invited to do so. Whilst a group of parents of children with special needs may be willing to talk at some length about local authority services, work-related stress can be a difficult topic to discuss.

Managers can be defensive (Argyris, 1990) when invited to discuss stress in the workplace. If their views became widely known, staff may take the view that they would not be treated fairly (Adams, 1963; Geurts et al, 1999; Novelli et al, 1995; Taris et al, 2002; Truchot et al, 2001). Staff may fear that admission to stress at work could be seen as a sign of weakness (Bailey & Sproston, 1987) with a possible disadvantage to their career development.

Potential difficulties in triggering fluent talk on stress were accentuated by the researcher's uncertainty about his own skills as a facilitator/interviewer. An opportunity was needed, therefore, to develop the facilitation techniques required to clearly and concisely explain the purposes of the research, assist participants in overcoming any initial reservations, detect when participants needed a prompt or invitation to speak and so on, in order to facilitate a fluent dialogue on this sensitive subject. The researcher needed an opportunity to trial the use of a proforma, or list of questions, for use in guiding the participants through a dialogue covering some key issues on work-related stress.

Managers and staff might have had concerns about confidentiality. It could not be assumed that they would allow their talk to be tape recorded. There were

possible difficulties in taping a group discussion in such a way that the talk of each speaker could be clearly recorded and separately transcribed. It was possible that participants would talk, but in a guarded manner. Any talk generated might have been bland or trivial and not contain data rich enough to identify, in analysis, the essence of what a speaker was saying.

The aims of the Pilot Study were set out as research questions and sub-questions below.

2.2. Methodology

2.2.1. Research Questions

Research Question 1

Will managers and staff sustain a dialogue with the researcher on the subject of work-related stress?

Research Sub-Question 1a

Can a proforma be devised which triggers a sufficient quantity of talk for analysis?

Research Sub-Question 1b

Will the interviewer facilitate talk of sufficient quality and substance to provide rich data for analysis?

Research Question 2

Can the talk of managers and staff, on the subject of work-related stress, be recorded and analysed

Research Sub-Question 2a

Will the participants consent to their talk being recorded onto audio tape?

Research Sub-Question 2b

Will the audio tape recording of a group dialogue, allow the talk of each individual to be transcribed accurately?

Research Sub-Question 2c

Does a comparison of manager and staff talk, reveal differing views on work-related stress?

2.2.2. Qualitative Method: individual versus group interviewing

The method of data gathering was qualitative and based on a preference for a phenomenological over a positivist approach. In its broadest meaning phenomenology advocates the study of experience rather than reducing phenomena to their simplest components and attempting to measure them objectively.

It was possible that participants' views could have been accessed from policy and discussion documents, minutes of meetings, records of outcomes routinely gathered in order to provide feedback to staff and possibly video tapes and other written materials used in staff training exercises (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Research Questions 1 and 2, contained wording which included the terms, talk or dialogue. It was concluded therefore that it was necessary to obtain directly, samples of manager's and staff's talk.

It was necessary to make a decision about whether to interview participants individually or in groups. Group interaction implies human beings perceiving and interpreting each other, acting, taking the other person into account and acting again; it is a dynamic process (Cohen & Manion, 1994).

A group approach is not always a preferred option to individual interviews. Members of a group can have a negative impact on the discussion. When the topic for discussion is sensitive and self disclosure is expected, this can impede or prevent discussion (Morgan, 1996). The presence of other participants may compromise the confidentiality of the research session (Kitzinger, 1995).

In comparing the relative productivity of individual interviews and focus groups, it has been found that participants in focus groups produced only 60 – 70 percent of the ideas they would have generated in an individual interview. The quality of the ideas was judged to be lower (Fern, 1982).

Whilst Fern's (1982) results may discount any notion that focus groups can create dynamic interactions which make them more productive than an equivalent number of individual interviews, the more important consideration may be their relative efficiency for any given project (Morgan, 1996).

The researcher was aware that work-related stress is a potentially difficult and embarrassing topic for discussion. Group work may facilitate the discussion of sensitive topics because the less inhibited members of a group pave the way for those who feel more reticent. Focus groups can encourage participation from people reluctant to be interviewed on their own or who feel they have nothing to say. (Kitzinger, 1995).

It was concluded that a major consideration was the possibility that anxieties about acknowledging work related stress might significantly inhibit the quality and quantity of participants' talk (see section 2.1). In balance, therefore, it was considered that peer support was needed as part of the interview process in this sensitive area, as a means of addressing such anxieties, favouring a group, over an individual approach.

2.2.2.1. Focus Groups and this Thesis

The interview format was not non-directive. It is acknowledged that a non-directive counselling approach, following Rogers (1945) has influenced interviewing style. However, in a counselling format the request for, and purpose of, the interview originate in the client, not the therapist. A fully, non-directive style of interviewing is not considered appropriate for research, where the researcher has research questions which need to be allowed to structure and guide the data gathering process (Robson, 1993).

A balanced approach, which allows participants to reveal important aspects of their lives, whilst allowing the researcher some control, is the focussed interview or focus group approach (Robson, 1993). Examination of the literature on focus groups indicates that these groups have the necessary features suited to this research. Focus groups provide a method of approaching people's emotional reactions to issues, through discussion. The purpose is not to build consensus, rather to obtain a range of opinions about issues. Although they are conducted by a moderator or facilitator on a relatively informal basis, they have an underlying structure and sequence which is designed to yield findings from analysis of recorded texts.

Focus groups do not adhere tenaciously to a predetermined agenda; they attempt to strike a balance using interaction and eliciting of participation. Focus groups encourage a wide range of responses, inviting contributions beyond the apparent range of the predetermined questions (Vaughn, Schumm & Sinagub, 1996).

Focus groups use questions and probes (prompts) prepared beforehand by a researcher. A researcher is thereby able to prepare focus group questions to generate responses which are related to the research questions. The focus group format usually involves asking a short list of around five questions. Probes or prompts are used in order to invite participants to expand on their responses (Vaughn, Schumm & Sinagub, 1996).

Focus groups suit the sample size in this thesis because they contain a small (6-12) number of participants. Focus groups suit Research Sub-Question 1a, requiring a sufficient quantity of talk for analysis, because they appear to be informal and invite participants to talk freely. Focus groups suit Research Question 1b, requiring talk of quality and substance, because they seek points of view, elicit perceptions, feelings, attitudes and ideas about a selected topic and allow participants to have direct contact with the researcher (Vaughn, Schumm & Sinagub, 1996).

In practice, the pitfalls of focus groups include participants making socially desirable responses, facilitator adhering too tenaciously to a list of questions, facilitator undervaluing responses from participants and the facilitator under-preparing beforehand. The results are not necessarily generalisable. Focus groups are an expensive form of data gathering. (Vaughn, Schumm & Sinagub, 1996). Not only must time be spent in the group discussion, the tape recorded data of group talk is time consuming to transcribe.

The opportunity offered in the Pilot Study, for the author to practice facilitator's skills, counterbalanced some of the disadvantages of focus groups. There may be difficulties in attempting to use this form of data gathering as an everyday exercise, but in this thesis, it was possible to allocate the necessary time and expense. With these factors in mind, it was concluded that the advantages of using focus groups appeared to outweigh the disadvantages.

2.2.3. Participants

This small scale study involved the use of a "non-probability sample" (Robson, 1993, p.140). There was no intention to claim that the findings could be generalised and applied to a wider population.

The participants were an area team of educational psychologists (EPs) comprising a staff group of 11 EPs (8 females; 3 males) plus their manager, a senior EP (female). The female to male ratio was comparable to that found in the national population of EPs (Association of Educational Psychologists [AEP] 2003) (see Table 2.1.).

The researcher had a previous relationship with the EPs in the Pilot Study, as he was simultaneously employed as an EP in the same local authority. That authority was divided into four administrative areas, each with its own area team of EPs led by an area EP manager (senior EP). The researcher's work as an EP was not located in the same area as the EP participants and so contact between researcher and participants was not on an everyday basis. Contact took place when all EPs, around forty employed in this local authority, met at whole-service meetings which took place every two months, for the purposes of administration and continuing professional development. There was therefore a

level on which the researcher and the Pilot Study participants were part of the same workplace group.

Choosing EP colleagues as the Pilot sample may be described as "convenience sampling" (Robson, 1993, p.141). It may be open to the criticism of choosing the nearest and most convenient persons to act as participants when teachers should have been selected, given their involvement as participants in the Main Study.

The researcher's EP colleagues were chosen for the Pilot Study because the author wished to trial data gathering procedures involving participants already known to him, so as to obtain interviewing practice under 'low risk' conditions. The use of a pilot as a form of interviewer training is considered desirable (Robson, 1993). There was an advantage in that the researcher's attention could be devoted to trialling techniques and procedures, in accordance with Research Sub-Questions 1a, 1b, 2a and 2b, reducing the need to focus on fostering rapport with participants given the researcher was already a member of their group. An opportunity was missed to invite participants to comment on the researcher's performance as interviewer, which might have enhanced the benefits of the pilot as a training exercise for the researcher.

Table 2.1. Characteristics of participants

Male/Female	Age
Manager	
F	57
Staff	
M	48
F	50
M	47
F	43
F	33
F	27
F	30
F	54
M	47
F	46
F	33

The participants were located in a shire county, in a mixed suburban/rural area. The sample was all white British and reflected the wider composition of the EP population in their employing local authority.

2.2.4. Purpose Explained and Rapport Building

The EP manager (Senior EP) was approached and invited, with her team of EPs, to take part in this research. The manager appeared interested and she invited the researcher to attend a routine staff meeting to explain the research and formally invite her and her staff team to participate.

The researcher's attendance at this team meeting was approximately two months before the actual gathering of data. The EP manager and many of her staff had been colleagues of the researcher for several years and this meeting

provided an opportunity to extend an existing rapport, as well as broadly outline the purpose of the research to the staff group and seek their agreement to take part.

It was explained that the aim of the research was to explore any differing views between managers and staff on work-related stress by tape recording their responses to questions in a semi-structured interview, analysing their talk, then comparing and contrasting the perceptions of managers and staff. It could be argued that this was priming participants and giving them a mental set, but it was considered important to be straightforward with participants about the purpose of the research (see section 2.2.5.1.).

It was made clear that there would be an interview with the staff group together and a second interview, separately with the manager, allowing recordings of manager's and staff's views to be clearly separated to aid the comparative analysis.

Interviewing staff in a group allowed peer group support. The availability of support may be important when people are expected to talk freely about stress at work (Bailey & Sproston, 1987). As there was only one manager amongst the participants, she had to be interviewed alone with no peer group support.

It was made clear that it was beyond the scope of this thesis to progress the data into the design and implementation of a stress intervention programme. The researcher suggested that, nevertheless, there would be possible benefits to participants. If a manager-staff comparison of views on work-related stress were to be made available, both sets of participants would be potentially in a position to jointly plan a focused intervention to address shared constraints.

Manager and staff seemed interested in the project and agreed to take part almost as soon as the explanation had been completed.

2.2.5. Explaining Confidentiality Arrangements

The confidentiality arrangements were described at the same staff meeting. It was clarified that no participant could be personally identified and that no names would be recorded. Participants were informed that the tape recordings were to be transcribed by a typist who was located some distance away, had no connection with their employer and no knowledge of the participants.

It was explained that, in order for the data to be of potential benefit to manager and staff, the manager-staff comparison of views was to be made available to all participants. It was made clear that no recordings, texts or analysis would be available to anyone other than the person(s) from whom that data emerged, without the prior agreement of the person(s) concerned. A sequence was described involving the researcher feeding back the manager's text analysis to her, and then asking the manager's agreement to disclose manager data to staff; the same sequence to be followed for staff.

The different anonymity positions of manager and staff group was discussed. As there was only one manager, the individual concerned becomes identifiable should she agree that manager data be shown to staff. The staff group had eleven members and the data for the group could be shown to the manager without identifying any individual. The individual staff members were able to remain anonymous, but the manager was not.

The manager had declared an intention to help her staff by agreeing to a study of their work-related stress. The manager was congratulated by the researcher, as part of the rapport building, for accepting this lack of anonymity. The views of all participants, including, of course the manager's were, of course, subject to confidentiality.

2.2.5.1. Ethical Issues

There was an ethical issue of confidentiality which was safeguarded (see section 2.2.5). The staff group were able to give their views with anonymity. The manager was made aware, before participating, that she was not in that position in order to comply with ethical guidelines (Psychological Society [BPS] 1993, para. 7.1).

A second ethical issue involved informing participants of the purpose of the research. It may have been possible to adopt an ethical position of "....withholding some of the details of the hypothesis under test..." (BPS, 1993, p.6). This option was not taken and participants were fully informed about the purposes of the research (see section 2.2.4).

When participants were informed that the purpose of the research involved making a comparison between the views of managers and staff, this introduced a possibility that they might have been guarded in their responses. They might have attempted to estimate each others' views and minimise the differences between them. There was some risk, therefore, that exploration of Research Sub-Questions 1a and 1b would be impeded, in that the quantity and quality of data might be reduced. Nonetheless it seemed important to attempt to explain the purpose of the research in order to maximise trust between researcher and participants (see section 1.9.1).

There was an ethical issue over consent from participants to take part in this research. "Investigators should realise that they are often in a position of authority or influence over participants.....This relationship must not be allowed to pressurise the participants to take part in, or remain in, an investigation." (BPS, 1993, p.9).

It may be that the researcher, as a member of the same workplace group as the participants, had influence over EP colleagues, in the sense that he was in a position to take advantage of their goodwill and willingness to support a colleague by participating in his research.

The researcher's conclusion was that EP colleagues did not feel under pressure to participate, but were keen to do so, borne out, for example, by their enthusiasm to extend the data gathering session beyond its allocated time (see section 2.2.8.1.).

2.2.6. Materials

2.2.6.1. Researcher's Script

Immediately before the staff focus group and manager interview, participants were reminded of the purpose of this research. In order to be ensure that all essential information was imparted, the researcher read essential details from a script prepared beforehand (see Appendix 1).

2.2.6.2. Devising the Interview/Focus Group Questions

The literature reviewed in Chapter 1 led to the research questions, which led to the interview/focus group questions.

Considering Research Sub-Question 1a: *Can a proforma be devised which triggers a sufficient quantity of talk for analysis?* In order to trigger a sufficient quantity of talk it seemed appropriate to start each proforma (Q1) with a straightforward question on staff stress which would require minimal thought on the part of participants.

Given manager and staff had differing duties and responsibilities it was assumed that drawing up separate questions for managers and staff would facilitate the most fluent talk from each. The manager was asked about her own stress and coping strategies (Q2 and Q3).

Considering Research Sub-Question 1b: *Will the interviewer facilitate talk of sufficient quality and substance to provide rich data for analysis?* An attempt was made to design questions which were concerned with some of the issues on work-related stress in the hope that the emotional reactions and a range of opinions might be generated (Vaughn, Schumm & Sinagub, 1996). Manager (Q5) and staff (Q2) were asked about the stress culture of the workplace as it seemed from the literature (Bailey & Sproston, 1987; Palmer, Cooper & Thomas, 2001) that this would be a matter of concern. Control is seen as related to stress in the workplace and so questions to manager (Q4) and staff (Q3, Prompt) were included (Jimmieson, 2000; Tattersall et al, 1995; Troup et al 2002; Spector, 1998). Managers (Q6) may sometimes take a view that stress is beneficial for staff (CBI, 2000) and so a question on this topic was included. The dialogue was broadened to allow a wider scope for discussion of stress issues by inviting the manager (Q9 & Q10) to talk about her senior manager's attempts to reduce stress. Staff (Q6 & Q7) were also invited to talk about the senior manager in the context of reducing staff stress.

2.2.6.3. Semi-structured, 1:1 Interview Proforma for EP Manager

Q1. What are the stressors of your staff?
Prompt. Practicalities like car parking. Communication. Staff shortages. IT Blame culture. Continuous change. Taking things personally.

Q2. What your own stressors?
Prompt. Is manager stress sufficiently recognised? Are your stressors basically the same as your staff; are there any others that you would like to add? Would it help if staff knew that managers are stressed too?

Q3. What are your overall stress coping strategies?
Prompt. Do managers have more control over working life than their team members have? Prompt. Do you feel stress arises out of insufficient control? Do managers have more control?

Q4. Do managers have more control over their working life than their staff/team have?
Prompt. Some people seem to think so. What do you think?

Q5. What is the stress culture of the workplace?
Prompt. As a manager, do you believe that staff stress is mainly personal? Does the work culture dictate that people should not admit to being stressed? Is stress a badge of honour?

Q6. Is stress beneficial in the workplace?
Prompt. Is a stressed worker a good worker?

Q7. What are your staff's overall stress coping strategies?
Prompt. Time management

Q8. What have you done as a line manager to reduce stress levels in your staff?
Prompt. Informal contacts. Informal support.

Q9. What has senior management done to address staff stressors?
Prompt. Counselling scheme offered at county level.

Q10. What more does senior management need to do to help with stress?
Prompt. What would a reasonable expectation be?

Q11. What more need you do to help your staff with stress?
Prompt. You have probably done a lot already. Is there any more to do, do you think?

2.2.6.4. Focus Group Proforma for Staff (EPs)

Q1. What are your stressors?
Prompt. Would you simply like to list them? IT, car parking, communication, etc.

Q2. What is the stress culture of the workplace?
Prompt. Do people think you should not complain about stress, you should not admit to being stressed. Is there a sort of stress culture which dictates what you should say or not say?

Q3. What coping strategies do you have for use in your everyday work?
Prompt. Time management strategies, personal organisation strategies, taking control.

Q4. What has your line manager specifically done to reduce your stress?
Prompt. Provides a listening ear; finishes meeting on time.

Q5. What more does your line manager need to do to reduce your stress?
Prompt. Provide better induction procedures; make more effort to reduce paperwork.

Q6. What has senior management done to reduce your stress?
Prompt. For example, are you aware that there is a stress counsellor employed by county?

Q7. What more does senior management need to do to reduce your stress?
Prompt. Reduce time required for attendance at service meetings.

2.2.6.5. Guidelines for Conducting the EP Manager Interview

The data gathering was required to fit in with the time span of the routine weekly EP meetings. The researcher estimated around 45 minutes, for each of the staff group and manager interviews.

Interactions between interviewer and interviewee are different in a one to one, compared to a group setting where complex dynamics within the group may take place. Different guidelines are required for each.

1. Inviting the person to talk; taking an interest in his/her views.
2. Use of open questions; obtaining a rich picture
3. Reflecting views and opinions as appropriate
4. Clarifying issues with closed questions.
5. Paraphrasing sections as appropriate.
6. Summarising views expressed.
7. Inviting to expand on tentative comments.
8. Calming anxieties and reassuring that there is permission to speak frankly.
9. Exploring selected issues

(Adapted from Cameron & Monsen, 1998).

2.2.6.6. Guidelines for Conducting the Staff (EP) Focus Group

1. Establish a supportive and non-evaluative atmosphere.
2. Follow a well thought out direction of investigation.
3. Decide beforehand whether some spontaneous talk can be allowed or whether the focus group questions must be used from the outset.
4. Discourage the participants from giving information which is tangential to the purposes of the research.
5. Curtail excessively verbose participants.
6. Listen attentively to be sensitive to what the responses are indicating.
7. See larger, overall issues and how comments relate to one another.
8. Repeat and re-phrase the wording of questions in the light of responses.

(Adapted from Strauss & Corbin,1998).

2.2.6.7. Reflective Notebook

The researcher attempted to make informal notes at the time of interview and focus group. The intention was to note themes and details which might not be easily expressed or detected in talk, for example whether participants' initial willingness to take part in the study, was sustained when the study took place. The researcher also considered recording non-verbal clues, for example from facial expressions, on the intensity of feeling about stress and the sincerity of views.

In the event, the management of the interview and the focus group, plus attending to the recording equipment and other procedural details, occupied all

of the researcher's attention and reflective notes made were sketchy. They were insufficient to inform the data gathering process.

2.2.6.8. Recording Equipment

A tape recorder and microphone were used to record all dialogues. Considering Research Question 2b: *Will the participants consent to the dialogue being recorded onto audio tape?* Care needed to be taken in recording the staff focus group. Initial, pre Pilot Study, trials with a single microphone placed on a table in the centre of a group of speakers, did not produce clear recordings of individual voices. Efforts were made to obtain a microphone which was specially designed to pick up voices from a group of speakers seated around a table.

2.2.7. Facilitator/Interviewer Techniques

The researcher acted as focus group facilitator/interviewer throughout. The style was that of moderator as summarised by Monsen (2000). The style of the moderator is crucial to the success of the focus group/interview as a research device.

Monsen (2000) suggests that the interviewer should be: knowledgeable about the matters being discussed in order to hold and sustain an informal conversation; structured and clear in introducing the purpose of the interview, outlining procedures, summarising and closing the interview; a careful listener to the content and nuances of what was said, seeking to get meanings described more fully; a critical listener, not taking everything at face value, questioning critically to test the reliability and validity of participants responses.

The interviewer should monitor in order to clarify, extend and provide interpretations, offering participants chances to confirm or disconfirm, using probe questions, with structure and purpose.

Monsen (2000) identifies some concepts from the counselling literature which were helpful, such as openness, acceptance and encouraging the participants.

2.2.7.1. Bias in Interviewing

Regarding Research Sub-Question 1a, the researcher's apprehensiveness about obtaining a sufficient quantity of data, may have inhibited his interaction with participants, rather than facilitating dialogue. In exploring Research Sub-Question 1b there was the prospect that the researcher may have, unwittingly or otherwise, manipulated the dialogue in an attempt to trigger opinions with a view to enhancing the quality and substance in the talk.

Prompts or probes were used as a means of inviting the participants to open up and expand on ideas. This may have accentuated the risk of the researcher straying into 'leading the witness' to say what the researcher wanted to hear.

2.2.7.2. Proportion of Transcript from each Participant

An estimate was needed of whether the researcher as facilitator had been able to structure the dialogue in a way that allowed the talk to be fairly evenly distributed amongst participants.

As the data was gathered anonymously a precise measure of the amount of talk from each participant could not be taken from the transcripts. To do so would have necessitated each person identifying him/herself on each occasion

that she/he spoke. Although a code name or number could have been used for self-identification, this might have left participants with a feeling that their anonymity was threatened. Such conditions were not likely to encourage the fluent talk needed for Research Question 1.

The researcher's recollection at the time, was that around 90% of the talk in the staff group came from eight of the eleven participants. Proportion of talk from any one participant did not seem related to the age or gender of the individual.

2.2.8. Procedure

2.2.8.1. Staff

Data gathering from staff took place as part of a routine meeting at their office base in mid 2001. The focus group was scheduled for 45 minutes but extended to 1½ hours in response to staff being keen to extend the session. All dialogue was tape recorded, transcribed then analysed.

Researcher thanked participants for their help and reminded them they would have the analysed data fed back to them as soon as it was available, which was likely to be a few weeks later.

2.2.8.2. Manager

The manager's one to one, interview took place separately, a month later, at the same venue. The manager took around 30 minutes to complete her interview. All dialogue was tape recorded, transcribed then analysed.

Researcher thanked manager for her help and reminded her about arrangements for the feedback of analysed data.

2.2.9. Transcript Analysis and the Literature

The analysis in the Pilot Study followed a simple sequence, starting with reviewing the literature, devising research questions, drawing up a list of focus group questions, facilitating a dialogue, recording and analysing the talk (Kvale, 1994).

Content analysis was the method adopted for analysing transcripts. This method originated in the qualitative analysis of material covered in the communications media in order to establish the relative extent of coverage devoted to particular topics such as violence or pornography. In a media context the analysis might have been in response to a research question such as, 'Is there a greater emphasis on sex and violence in the mass media compared to ten years ago?' Content analysis has been extended to assess bias in school textbooks in relation to matters such as race, ethnicity, gender and so on. In psychology and sociology this approach has been used in the analysis of open-ended questionnaire data and of transcripts derived from audio taped discussions.

Content analysis is to be distinguished, for example, from a grounded theory approach, which may also used to analyse audio taped discussions (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The grounded theory process is summarised by Miller (1995) as follows. Transcribed interviews are first analysed as far as "Level 1 codes" (p.8). This analysis involves a word by word, line by line examination of the transcript, then each discrete incident, idea or event is given a Level 1 code, which is at a

slightly higher conceptual level than the identified words in the transcript. Miller (1995) described how analysis can be extended by categorising and grouping the list of Level 1 codes into a smaller number of Level 2 codes which are at a higher level of abstraction. Level 2 codes are, in turn, examined and grouped into Level 3 codes, which are of a higher level of abstraction again. Ultimately, Level 3 codes are grouped under one single code referred to as the Basic Social/Psychological Process (BSP) which is at the highest level of abstraction in this sequence. The BSP is "the final theory," and given it is "grounded in the data," (p.10) it gives this strategy its name.

In grounded theory the sequence starts with the transcript, which is taken through a process of ".....interplay between researchers and data" in a way which is creative and open to a wide range of possibilities. The creative process may go as far as, ".....making use of avenues of expression such as art, music and metaphors to stimulate thinking." (Strauss et al, 1998, p.13). In content analysis the sequence starts with the research question, deciding on a sampling strategy, then seeking an answer in the transcript.

In content analysis, texts are perceived as a, "data mountain" which has to be made, ".....manageable through summary and coding," (Robson, 1993, p.390). It was necessary to decide on the amount of transcript which would be selected and recorded as a unit of text. This might have been a single word, a group of words which constitute a semantic unit (e.g. 'ice cream' or 'Houses of Parliament') themes (e.g. social characteristics) whole sentences or paragraphs and so on (Robson, 1993).

The content analysis literature offers a range of guidelines for the wording of categories or codes. At its simplest level, this process involves reading transcripts and selecting a chunk of text which may be a key word, phrase,

sentence or group of sentences and summarising it by assigning a heading or code. The transcript is then read line by line until it is all coded. "Conceptualizing, reducing, elaborating and relating often are referred to as *coding."* (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.12).

In deciding on the wording for a particular code, the researcher reads the text line by line and, for example, with reference to a particular phrase or sentence asks him/herself what is the "major idea" brought out (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.120). The literature describes this style of coding in various ways, for example as "open coding" (Strauss & Corbin,1998, p.119).

The transcripts were coded in a way which may imply a degree of inference, but the intention was to keep this to a minimum. The coding for the Pilot Study was considered as summarising rather than interpreting, although, "Any time one classifies, selects, or places a conceptual name on something, there is some degree of interpretation of meaning as derived from context....." (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.109).

The research questions determine the degree of inference used (Robson, 1993). Some inference was required in order to extract the views of managers and staff from their talk in response to Research Question 2c as: *Does a comparison of manager and staff talk, reveal differing views on work-related stress?*

Disadvantages of content analysis include: it can be extremely time consuming, and computerisation may not always lead to a great improvement in time demands; it is inherently reductive in that much information is rejected in order to 'clear the ground' in the expectation of a better view of what was said; it often disregards the context, for example, the purpose of the discussion from

which the text was produced; it may lack a theoretical basis; it is subject to increased error as the degree of inference increases (Busha & Harter, 1980).

In conclusion, the advantages of content analysis include: direct access to dialogues through transcripts; unobtrusive analysis of talk; providing insight into the complexities of language used; the permanent form of the data allows checking for reliability. These were the over-riding considerations which led to its adoption in this thesis.

2.2.9.1. Stages of Analysis

The following is a variation of five steps for transcribing, identifying and refining themes identified by Monsen (2000).

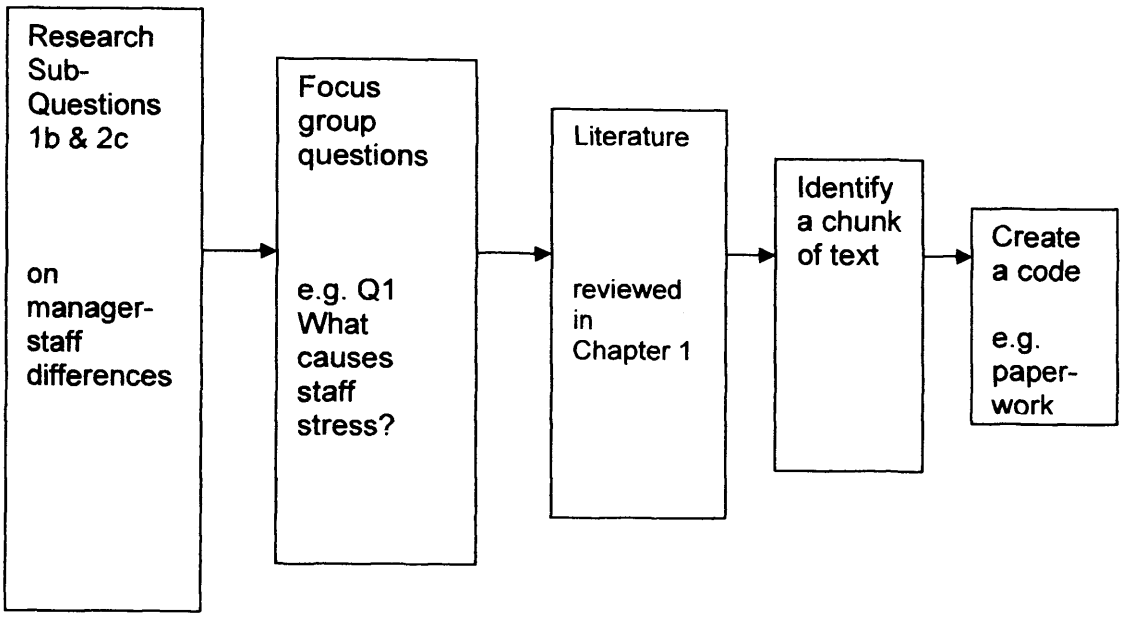
Stage 1. The focus group, with the staff of 11 EPs, and a separate, individual interview with their manager (senior EP) were audio taped and transcribed, producing two separate transcripts. The typist was instructed to type everything exactly as she heard it, starting a new line for each change of speaker. Names and any other details which might have identified individuals were deleted from the transcript. Each script was labelled manager or staff. To make each change of speaker easier to locate, each new speaker was preceded by typing an identifying label, researcher, manager, or staff as appropriate. Each line of each transcript was numbered.

A random sample of approximately 50% of the transcripts was listened to by the researcher, in order to check for accuracy and it was found that they were virtually perfect.

Stage 2. Back up copies of the texts on the computer, in the Word application, and also in hard copy were made, so that the originals were retained intact after annotations, highlighting, cutting and sorting.

Stage 3. Both transcripts were read through by the researcher three times. Figure 2.1 shows the coding sequence which the researcher had in mind when reading transcripts.

Figure 2.1. A rationale for coding



At the initial stage of coding the codes were tentative. For Q1, chunks apparently related to each other included:

"....hit and run approach (line 16).

"... we sell ourselves as an intervention based service (line 20).

"...get bogged down in statutory work..... stressful not being able to work that sort of way..... when that's how you feel you would work best." (line 22). (see Appendix 1, Transcript Analysis, Staff Text Sample).

At this stage of analysis these chunks were grouped under a temporary or tentative code, *Statutory pressures.*

Using a coloured pen, the above chunks of text were highlighted in the same colour. This process was repeated with a different colour for another group of

related text chunks and a further tentative code was assigned. This process was continued until all chunks of text which apparently stemmed from comparisons, opinions, suggestions and emotional reactions had been highlighted and allocated their own tentative code such as: *feeling confused; undervalued; get a balance in my life;* from the staff's script and: *timescales; getting it right*; from the manager's script. These chunks of text seemed to be 'rich data' of emotional significance for the speaker and potentially informative in any manager-staff comparison.

Stage 4. At this stage approximately 20 tentative codes had been identified across both texts. The data for two texts covered a total of 16,203 words. A structure was required to provide the author with an overview of a large amount of text in order to develop these tentative codes into finalised codes. To provide a clear picture, the structure needed to include the positioning of each chunk of text alongside its assigned code.

This could have been done by hand, using a sequence such as the following. Each tentative code is written on a sheet of paper, the chunks of text belonging to it are cut from the text and placed in a row alongside it. This layout is then re-read several times. At each re-reading, the aim is to develop the tentative codes into finalised codes. Some of the chunks of text are removed if they do not quite fit a code. The transcript is re-read and new chunks of text are cut out and inserted next to a code. Simultaneously the wording of the tentative codes is refined until the tentative codes become finalised codes.

For example the chunks of text quoted above, ***".....hit and run approach....we sell ourselves as an intervention based service.....get bogged down in statutory work.....stressful not being able to work that sort of way....when that's how you feel you would work best"*** were included with others such as,

".....paperwork....volume of paperwork...prioritisation," and ultimately split between two finalised codes, *Can't give quality service* and *Paperwork.*

Stage 5. In practice this paper exercise was carried out using the Word application on the computer. In order to provide the author with a better visual picture of the text, the font size was reduced to 8, making more of the text visible on the screen. The page was divided into two columns, the text placed in the left hand column, with the selected chunks of text put into italics. The tentative codes were typed into the right hand column, keeping each code on the same line as its italicised, matching chunk of text (see Appendix 1). The layout is that used by Miller (1995).

The text in this Word application structure was then re-read again several times. At each re-reading, the aim was to develop the tentative codes into finalised codes. Some of the italicised chunks of text were taken out of italics if the refinement process meant they could not be blended into a code with other chunks. Other new chunks were put into italics. Simultaneously the wording of the tentative codes was developed until they became finalised codes.

2.2.10. Trusting the Data

Transcript data may be interpreted in a variety of ways and another researcher may have arrived at different results. An initial assessment of the authenticity of the data may be assisted by an explanation of the rationale followed in coding; this is shown in Figure 2.1.

The wording of codes and their corresponding chunks of text also needed to be scrutinised. Credibility might have been checked by "peer debriefing" (Robson, 1993, p.404) or the researcher's inviting colleagues to collaborate in

the coding process in the expectation that a consensus could be achieved. This would have provided a means of assessing whether the coding process had been implemented reliably and whether the wording chosen for the codes accurately and consistently reflected the chunks of text from which they were derived.

An assumption that greater reliability is achieved when professionals combine together in order to consider information and make decisions accordingly, may not be borne out in practice. There may be a risk of compliance when the third party is known to the researcher. There may be a, "...lack of 'science' .....(and).....the promotion of a no-conflict norm." (Harris,1999, p.251).

Analysis by consensus does not confirm whether the analysed data was a valid reflection of what was said. The credibility assessment adopted, therefore, was checking back with participants as to whether the data made sense (Stiles, 1993). The codes and themes were authenticated by feeding them back, in a presentation to the participants from whom they emerged. The full texts plus a list of codes and chunks were circulated to participants as part of this exercise. These were discussed and the reactions of participants confirmed to the researcher at the time that the data was authentic.

Manager and staff found the feedback of data, and the manager-staff data comparison provided, to be of interest. Staff noted the pattern in the data which showed that staff listed as stressful, themes which were not mentioned by the manager.

External checks may be carries out if required in that all raw interview data is available for scrutiny by the examiners, in the form of audio tape recordings of the entire discussions and verbatim transcriptions of all dialogue. Audio tape

seems preferable to the technique of a facilitator summarising points onto a flip chart, whilst the focus group discussion is taking place. There may be a potential for summarising in a biased or inaccurate way, with no means of revisiting the data and checking for errors between the original talk and flip chart summaries.

2.3 Results

2.3.1. Research Sub-Question 1a

Research Sub-Question 1a: *Can a proforma be devised which triggers a sufficient quantity of talk for analysis?* The manager interview plus the staff focus group yielded 16,843 words, which appeared to be a sufficient quantity of transcript data. This research sub-question appeared to be answered in the affirmative.

Samples of manager and staff text are included in Appendix 1.

2.3.2. Research Sub-Question 1b

Research Sub-Question 1b: *Will the interviewer facilitate talk of sufficient quality and substance to provide rich data for analysis?* This research sub-question is addressed in combination with Research Sub-Question 2c.

This question was concerned with whether the researcher, as interviewer, had facilitated the generation of rich data, in the form of talk from participants revealing opinions, attributions, suggestions and emotional reactions. The quality of the talk needed to be substantial, not bland or trivial. When analysed

and fed back to participants, the data needed to be such that the participants could take something from it, informing them and possibly assisting them in identifying and addressing work-related stress (Salmon, 2003).

2.3.3. Research Sub-Question 2a

Research Sub-Question 2a: *Will the participants consent to their talk being recorded onto audio tape?* This was answered in the affirmative; the participants did give their consent.

Some slight confidentiality concerns were stated during the dialogue (see Appendix 1, Staff Text Sample, lines 28-29). At the culmination of the staff data gathering session, staff made it clear to the researcher that they were most keen that their line manager should not receive the verbatim text, as they felt that individuals would be identifiable from the details of their talk. The researcher reassured participants that the group discussion would be fed back to them and then, if agreed, to their line manager, in a format which was analysed into codes and themes; not verbatim format. Participants seemed ready to accept reassurance that anonymity would be adhered to.

Overall, participants had few reservations about the tape recording of their talk. Possibly any concerns were overridden by their apparent keenness to take part in this research.

2.3.4. Research Sub-Question 2b

Research Sub-Question 2b: *Will the audio tape recording of a group dialogue, allow the talk of each individual to be transcribed accurately?* This was answered in the affirmative.

The author found that the transcription time for a tape containing the conversation of several people together was around five times the time taken to transcribe a single voice. Whilst the transcription was time consuming, provided it was done methodically, each individual voice was discernible when the recording was played back.

2.3.5. Research Sub-Question 2c

Research Sub-Question 2c: *Does a comparison of manager and staff talk, reveal differing views on work-related stress?* This is considered with Research Sub-Question 1b. These two questions in combination asked whether the texts contained data which was sufficiently rich, not bland or trivial, to lend itself to analysis into codes, and whether differing views between managers and staff on work-related stress would be revealed, if present.

The talk of the EP manager and her team of EPs covered stress caused by factors intrinsic to the job (Cooper, 1988), issues connected with the culture of the workplace, problems with defining their role and providing a quality service, the range of demands which their work placed upon them (Palmer, Cooper & Thomas, 2001).

Codes were grouped under headings in Table 2.2, to reflect these areas of the literature.

Table 2.2. Focus Group Q1:
comparison of views

What are the causes of staff's stress?		
Codes	Staff (EPs)	Manager (Senior EP)
	% of total Q1 coded chunks	% of total Q1 coded chunks
Intrinsic to the job		
Statutory duties	7.1	5.0
Time constraints	6.3	5.0
Routine administration	5.6	0.0
Prioritising	4.0	10.0
Not enough control of own work	7.9	5.0
Culture		
Mismatch in expectations	11.1	0.0
Staff not OK to talk about stress	9.5	10.0
Lack of feedback	8.7	0.0
Staff's working long hours	4.0	5.0
Role		
Can't give quality service	6.3	0.0
Not practise what we preach	7.1	0.0
Change	3.2	0.0
Role uncertainties	2.4	0.0
Professional standards	1.6	25.0
Demands		
Conflicting demands	3.2	5.0
Unexpected demands	2.4	5.0
Difficult parents	1.6	10.0
Anger of others	1.6	0.0
Other		
Work-home boundaries	3.2	5.0
Part timer	1.6	0.0
Environmental constraints	1.6	10.0

Throughout both texts 40 codes were allocated in total, of which 21 codes were assigned to responses to Q1 and listed in Table 2.2.

An attempt was made to assign a weighting to each code frequency by expressing each frequency as a percentage as follows. The frequency of each code was noted, for example, Code: *Statutory duties,* occurred 9 times for staff, with a frequency of 1 for manager. The total frequencies for all codes, related to Q1 was 126 (staff) and 20 (manager). Therefore the weighted frequency for Code: *Statutory duties,* expressed as the percentage of total number of coded utterances (chunks of text) was 7.1% for staff and 5.0% for manager.

2.3.5.1. Overview

In the literature on content analysis, data analysis has often been carried out by counting codes and comparing their frequencies. Each frequency was weighted, or expressed as a percentage of the total number of coded utterances, as detailed in the preceding paragraph (Section 2.3.5.) and then a ".....comparison of simple percentages of use is often all that is needed." (Robson, 1993, p.281). An overview of EPs and their manager's views on causes of stress in EPs, is available from inspecting and comparing weighted code frequencies.

The themes most frequently referred to by EPs were: a mismatch of expectations, particularly in relation to teachers; not feeling free to admit to their own work-related stress; not receiving sufficient feedback from the EP manager; not having a sufficient sense of control over their work. EPs reported feeling stressed by management's insistence that they offer an intervention service, whist not being in a position to do so because of competing statutory duties and other time constraints.

The EP manager most frequently referred to EPs' need to meet professional standards as a cause of their stress. Other high frequency causes of EP stress referred to by the EP manager included difficult parents, prioritising of work and constraints in the office environment.

A comparison of weighted code frequencies (Robson, 1993) may lead to misleading conclusions. For example, from Table 2.2, a comparison of weighted code frequencies would appear to indicate manager-EP differing views on the code, *Difficult parents,* as a source of EP stress (staff 1.6%; manager 10.0%). However, examination of text chunks (see section 2.3.5.2; Table 2.3) indicates that manager and EPs agree on difficult parents as a source of stress for EPs. On the basis of comparing code frequencies (Table 2.2) manager and staff appear to agree on the code, *Staff's working long hours*, as a cause of staff stress (staff 4.0%; manager 5.0%). Examination of text chunks would seem to indicate that they differ (see section 2.3.5.3, Table 2.3).

In this thesis, in order to compare manager and staff views reliably, it seemed necessary to compare text chunks. A comparison of code frequencies was used only to provide an overview of the data's surface features.

2.3.5.2. Similar Views of Manager and Staff

On some of the identified causes of staff stress, manager and staff took a similar view. (Page and line numbers below, refer to the full texts which are not included in Appendix 1. The full texts are available to the examiners if required).

EPs took the view that lack of control over their own time and the content of their work was a cause of stress.

"I mean like with teachers, how much of our work is controlled by us, or as you say being regulated externally. . . . I do feel that we do have quite a lot imposed on us." (p.10, lines 25-27).

It appears that control problems over the allocation of time can create stress (Jimmieson et al, 2000; Spector, 1998; Troup et al, 2002). EPs' stress appeared to emerge from difficulties in gaining control at a basic level, in administration and other routine details of their everyday work.

The EP manager appears to have an understanding of the difficulties experienced by EPs in gaining control over the everyday aspects of their work. ***"A teacher in a school can take it into their head to get irate and upset about a particular child and they will be on the phone and we can't control that."*** (p.2, lines 52-52).

The EP manager appeared to take the view that some work-related stressors are beyond the direct control of the individual (Weiner, 1980).

EPs seemed to acknowledge that it is important to prioritise their daily tasks, but they did not appear to see this as a form of time management, which might result in lower levels of stress. EPs found prioritisation, in itself, to be a stressful act.

"There is prioritisation for suggested entries, deadlines, and I find that quite stressful." (p.8, line 17).

It may be that, in the act of prioritising, the EP is confronted with a high workload and an implied pressure from the EP manager to find a means of coping. High workload and manager pressure have been linked with stress (CBI, 1991).

The EP manager saw prioritising as a cause of stress for EPs rather than a means of managing it.

"They have got their high point of anxiety whatever child it might be at the moment. And if you have got ten schools you have ten of those. And if you have got 30 schools you have got 30 of those and I think the stress comes from trying to prioritise those and put them in some sort of reasonable order and somehow help other people to make sense of that." (p.1, lines 7-10).

EP manager and EPs seemed to take a similar view in seeing prioritisation of their work as a task which causes stress, rather than a technique for gaining control over word demands and thereby reducing stress.

EPs expressed a view that parents were a source of their stress:

"Parents, yeah. When parents phone and get put through to you and you don't have any information in front of you about the child, and they expect you to know what they're talking about and you often don't. Somebody comes through and says Mrs So-and-so's on the telephone and you're like, you know, I don't even know the name of the child and then you have to take the call, and you haven't got a file in front of you and I find that quite difficult..... Difficult parents, determined to make trouble." (p.8, lines 25-30).

EP manager expressed a similar view that difficult parents are a source of work-related stress for EPs.

"I think we are seeing an increase in what I call the 'mad parent' syndrome, we were just talking about one then with (name) wasn't I. You know the parents that we have got that really are insistent, there is something very wrong with their children the whole time, I think that causes quite a bit of stress." (p.1, lines 27-30).

EP manager and EPs appeared to take a similar view on interacting with difficult parents. Difficult relationships in the workplace are considered to be causes of stress (Palmer, Cooper & Thomas, 2001).

2.3.5.3. Differing Views of Managers and Staff

EPs saw the quality of their work diminished as a result of stress arising from statutory duties.

"***I find there's too much weight on statutory work, things that have been imposed to attend or . . . from the LEA, doesn't have the same satisfaction to build a relationship with the school or the pupils that you could if you were doing other work.***" (p.9 lines 5-7).

The manager was concerned about EP stress from statutory duties but she had a different perspective.

"There's not an easy way of resolving it. We've used locum time to do some of it." (p. 5, line 2).

EP manager and EPs focussed on the same issue but they had differing perceptions. The EP manager referred to the office based administration aspect of statutory duties; her means of dealing with this was to provide a locum EP to complete statutory paperwork. EPs concern was with casework in schools having a legal, rather than a professional emphasis. For the EP manager the issue had been addressed. For EPs, the difficulties persisted and the outcome was insufficient opportunity to build relationships, leading to stress (Palmer, Cooper & Thomas, 2001).

EPs appeared to work long hours. They reported this as a source of stress, but EPs seemed to opt for long working hours as a less stressful alternative to leaving work outstanding.

"You know, you just sort of . . . and people say you really shouldn't be working at the weekends. And you say well when would you actually like me to get all this work done if I'm not doing it at the weekends. Which I think is a huge issue because I would be more stressed coming in on Monday morning with twelve

outstanding reports than if I'd spent all day Saturday and Sunday writing my twelve reports. So it's catch twenty-two really isn't it?" (p.10, lines 43-47).

The EP manager appeared to acknowledge that EPs work long hours.

"I think it's dangerous to get into this, you know, if I'm going to do it properly I've got to do more and more and more. I don't think that's healthy. I always try to go home on a Friday first and tell them to leave and things like that. You know, you don't want to feel as if you've got to work all those hours or you're not doing it properly." (p.3, lines 29-32).

The EP manager's view appeared to differ from that of EPs, in the value attributed to working extended hours. The manager might have voiced appreciation of her team's conscientious efforts to complete work, and she might have approved of EPs employing that strategy in order to gain control and reduce stress (Jimmieson et al, 2000; Spector, 1998; Troup et al, 2002). However the manager seemed to be of the opinion that it was not advisable for her team operate in this way, and that it denoted a perfectionist approach which was not appropriate.

EPs perceived that, within the culture of the workplace, they were not expected to formally talk about their work-related stress. They seemed to have a view that they should not be stressed, and, if they were, it would be an imposition to say so.

".....so there's a sort of reluctance for me anyway to really say actually I feel stressed because I should be able to deal with this.... But it's foreign to express those feelings isn't it..... Or if you feel that actually you might be burdening somebody else if you say you feel stressed and they've got to kind of, you're kind of expecting them to share in it as well then, and they might equally well be stressed and is it fair of you to tell them that you're stressed in addition to the stress they've already got." (p. 11, lines 17-18, 30 & 32-35).

The EP manager's view was consistent with the EPs' perception of little encouragement or expectation that EPs will talk about their own stress, but the manager differed in the perspective applied.

"There are certain team members who are always complaining about being stressed as if they should be, because that means they are working hard which I don't necessarily agree with but I try to play that down with them always." (p.3, lines 15-17).

Whereas the EP's stance seemed to be one of regret that stress was not an expected as a formal topic of discussion, the manager's perception showed little regret. The manager espoused the fostering of a caring ethos which allowed discussion of stress to be included at an informal level.

"I think we're very good at supporting each other here. People will come in and say, oh, I've had a terrible morning or whatever, and somebody will always stop and listen. I mean there's a lot of chatting in corridors goes on and whatever." (p. 3, lines 35-37).

The manager appeared to believe that it was sufficient to include stress amongst other work-related issues to be addressed informally. The manager seemed to accept discussion of stress rather than advocating it. The manager may have been inclined towards the belief that the views of EPs on the causes of work-related stress are not credible, not to be trusted (Daniels, 1996) and not worth exploring at a formal level.

It can be seen from the EP manager's transcript sample (see Appendix 1) that the code, *Staff OK to talk about stress,* was used when chunks of text were conceptualised as informal discussion being accepted, or seen as helpful by manager. The perception that informal discussion was helpful on stress was shared by one EP.

" I feel that if I've got a problem I think I could go and talk to everybody here and say, oh, I don't know what to do. I think in our mini-team meeting, we always say, oh, I don't know what to do today, I've got this child, what do you think . . . and I think we can talk quite openly." (p.11, lines 24-26).

The code, *Staff not OK to talk about stress* was applied to chunks such as on p.3, lines 15-17 above, where the manager appeared to take a view which seemed to conflict with her acceptance of informal discussion. It seemed that there was another level, the official, formal level, on which she did not expect discussion of work-related stress.

2.3.5.4. Manager's View Unknown

Mismatch in expectations was a cause of stress for EPs, but not referred to by the manager; her views are unknown in this area. EPs described a mismatch of expectations between an EP and a teacher who expects the EP to guide a pupil through a panel of people who determine whether additional resources might be offered to the school.

"One of my SENCOs whose case didn't get through, and I knew it wouldn't, and I told her and she only burst into tears, but she refused to make me tea because I hadn't done my job....." (p.13, lines 12-14).

This reaction, directed at the EP, seemed to have been emotionally intense. Such episodes may be a frequent occurrence, part of the culture or climate of the organization (Cooper, Cooper & Eaker, 1988). This was the cause of stress most frequently mentioned by EPs. There is need for support to be provided or arranged by a manager (Cooper, 1998). There is a need to know the manager's view on this issue as a cause of EP stress and whether her perception is similar or different to that of EPs themselves.

There are further themes which EPs frequently identified as causes of stress, where the manager's view was unknown. EP managers had declared, as a matter of policy, that EPs offer an 'intervention' service as opposed to an 'assessment' model or 'consultation' model of EP service delivery.

"We sell ourselves as an intervention based service, don't we, and yet I don't feel that I'm doing enough of that or having the opportunities to do that." (p.9, lines 20-21).

There was an apparent source of stress for EPs, who were not 'practising what they preached.' They were expected to adopt an espoused position that an intervention service was offered to schools when, in practice or in-use, this was seldom the case (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Argyris, 1990).

EPs' referred to a lack of feedback from manager about the quality of their work as a cause of stress. EPs being anxious about how well they are doing, and not having those anxieties resolved, can lead to stress (Nytro et al, 2000).

"It's not always clear whether you've done a good job or not. I find that quite stressful. Not knowing whether actually what I've done has been good enough. Because we're never really given that clear indicator." (p.10, lines 50-52).

Although the manager was perceived by EPs as having the necessary knowledge about them, that knowledge was seen as not being imparted.

"I think she does. I think she knows a lot about what we do..... But often it's the – I've not heard anything bad about you so you must be doing alright." (p.15, lines 3-4).

The design of this thesis did not allow for unknowns, once identified, to be explored in more detail, with participants.

2.3.5.5. Summary

There appear to be three components, as shown in Table 2.3 revealing agreement between managers and staff on some of the causes of staff stress, areas where the manager-staff views differ and stress issues on which the manager's view is not known.

Table 2.3. Summary of manager's and staff's views

Manager and Staff agree	Manager and staff differ	Manager's views not known
Not enough control of own work	Statutory duties	Mismatch in expectations
Prioritising	Staff's working long hours	Lack of feedback
Difficult parents	Staff not OK to talk about stress	Not practice what we preach

EP manager and EPs describe EP stress arising from statutory duties, working long hours and whether it was expected that EPs talk formally about their work-related stress, but manager and EPs had differing viewpoints, different perspectives on how these issues impinge on stress in EPs.

The data was sufficiently rich and lent itself to analysis to the point of revealing differing manager-staff views on the causes of work-related stress. Research Sub-Questions 1b and 2c were answered in the affirmative.

2.4 Discussion

It was an advantage that the researcher was a member of the participants' group. This existing relationship possibly shortened or by-passed the process of trust development needed to talk about work-related stress. There was a disadvantage in that it may have been difficult for EPs, as participants, to see the researcher in his new role as an investigator of work-related stress. This may have resulted in a hesitancy or artificiality about stating explicitly, issues on work-related stress, which are usually unstated, but shared and understood implicitly amongst members of a group (Robson, 1993).

The staff (EPs) in the Pilot Study may have had an agenda in offering their co-operation. There may have been one or two stressed members of the area team, whom the group wished to support. This may have distorted the staff's responses. The staff group might have acted on behalf of that person by reporting themselves as stressed when they were not, or as more stressed than they actually were.

In the past, EPs may have been unwilling to broach with their manager, the subject of work-related stress throughout their team, because of anxieties about how admission to stress might be construed by their manager (Bailey & Sproston, 1987). The Pilot Study showed that participants were willing to talk with the researcher at length and in some depth, on the sensitive subject of work-related stress and were agreeable to their talk being recorded, transcribed and analysed. The arrival of the researcher may have been welcomed as a means of registering EPs' stress by a less direct, possibly less effective, but anonymous route. In conclusion the researcher's pre-existing relationship with participants did not seem to impede the data gathering process.

The staff transcript showed that responses to focus group Q1 represented 65% of their total coded chunks of text. (The coding of the manager text showed that she responded to a wider range of questions; 30% of her total coded chunks were made in response to Q1). There was too little staff text in response to the remaining focus group questions, to provide a viable question by question, manager-staff comparison. Therefore, EP manager and EPs were compared on their responses to Q1 only.

The Pilot Study provides a comparison between the espoused theories of manager and staff. The data gathered was solely in the form of talk, expressing views, perceptions, beliefs and so on about causes of stress in staff. What happens in practice is of a different nature. "We cannot learn what someone's theory-in-use is simply by asking him. We must construct his theory-in-use from observations of his behaviour." (Argyris & Schon, 1974, p.7). Therefore when EPs talked about their own work-related stressors, we do not know whether what they said was 'true'. There were no observations of behaviour, no observations of EPs under stress and no opportunity, in practice, to assess their 'real' causes of stress.

Nevertheless, there is a view that a person's perception of his/her own world, is real: ".....there is an independently existing reality to which we can get access, even though sometimes we may get it wrong." (Wetherell & Still, 1996, p.100). A person's espoused theory and their theory-in-use may be similar or "compatible" (Argyris & Schon, 1974, p.7). When managers do not perceive staff stress in the same way as staff, there is a sense in which managers are not seeing the real causes of staff stress. A manager might value information on differing perceptions between managers and staff, as a means of moving towards a more accurate manager's view of work-related stress in staff.

2.4.1. Model I Learning

It appears that EPs and their manager were agreed that EPs' stress arose from factors such as lack of control over their own work, prioritising and difficult parents. It seems less clear how this shared view might lead the manager to learning more and developing a more accurate perception of work-related stress in her staff, when work-related stress seemed not to be officially acknowledged as a concern and not formally discussed between manager and staff.

To identify lack of control and so on, as causes of stress may, for EPs and their managers, be a statement of the obvious which has become, "..... part of the fabric of everyday life." To state that EP stress comes from these sources may have, ".....come to be viewed as rational, sensible and realistic." Such statements may have been heard so frequently they have, "....become organizational norms." (Argyris, 1990, p.25).

When the EP manager and the EPs agreed on some of the causes of EP stress, the manager has shown that she has learnt about surface features, symptoms or "presenting problems" (Argyris, 1990, p.92). The manager seems likely to have arrived at this knowledge through Model I learning. The causes of stress identified via this means seem to be straightforward and rational explanations for EP stress. When such explanations are restated over a period of time, the outcome may be the establishing of "organizational defensive routines" (Argyris, 1990, p.25).

The manager's apparent understanding of staff stress is at a surface level. By these routines, a view may have developed that the causes of EPs' stress have been identified and there is no need to look further. This defends against

the prospect of the manager having to learn more about EP stress and may act as a block to the manager's forming an accurate perception of the real, underlying causes of stress. The expectation that the manager and EPs do not formally discuss work-related stress, can remain in place, as there seems nothing new to be learnt from such discussion.

2.4.2. Espoused Theory versus Theory-in-Use

Included in the manager's transcript, the code, *EPs OK to talk about stress*, occurred seven times. Six of these are on the transcript sample included in Appendix 1. Within the context of the transcript the researcher has taken these chunks to refer to the acceptability of discussion on an informal basis. The code, *EPs not OK to talk about stress* occurred on two occasions only (shown in Appendix 1) and the researcher took these chunks to refer to the inadmissibility of discussing stress formally, for example at staff meetings.

The manager appears to have a caring, espoused position on work-related stress in her staff. This espoused position is stated in relation to informal encounters with and between EPs.

"Oh no, I think we all admit to being stressed all the time." (p.3, line 10).

"As I say, I'm available, I'm here, you know. I've always got time to hear what they're concerned about." (p.3, lines 43-44).

She also held a contradictory view which may reflect her theory-in-use.

"I think if you can't cope with stress, you shouldn't be in the job really. Because it is there isn't it? (p. 3, lines 5-6).

Not including work-related stress in formal discussion may be an example of manager error. Errors are likely to be repeated until a Model II approach is adopted. This involves productive reasoning rather than the defensive

reasoning referred to earlier. Within Model II managers reflect on their own thoughts and feelings and consider any attributions they may be making. Managers take the initiative by using constructive confrontation whilst encouraging others to do the same (Argyris, 1990).

Model II learning would involve the manager in structured, formal discussion with EPs about their work-related stress. This may involve the EP manager overcoming any embarrassment and giving her views, for example, on a perceived need to give EPs more feedback on the quality of their work, a cause of staff stress on which her opinion is hitherto unknown.

2.4.3. Defensiveness

Causes of staff stress, frequently referred to by staff, but not mentioned by the manager include: mismatch in expectations between EPs and the teachers whom they try to help; lack of feedback from manager to EPs about the quality of their work; EPs' feeling an obligation to espouse that they offer an intervention service, when in practice, they have little time to provide this. The manager's view is unknown on these causes of staff stress.

Alternatively, when a work-related stress issue is of concern to EPs, but the manager's view is not stated, then not stating a view may be a form of manager's defence to avoid acknowledging or discussing a potentially embarrassing issue (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Argyris, 1990).

A definition of defence or defensiveness may be difficult to discern from Argyris' (Argyris & Schon,1974; Argyris, 1990) use of those terms (see section 1.13). However, refraining from speaking on an issue may be seen as a defensive act. Defence may take the form of 'repression' or forgetting about an

important topic such as the expectations mismatch experienced by EPs. When the manager does not discuss her omitting to provide staff with feedback on the quality of their work, this may be 'compartmentalisation' or failing to see a connection with stress. There may be 'avoidance' or steering clear of the concerns of EPs on non-provision of an intervention service because this might place the manager in a conflict with her senior managers. The manager may be displaying 'negativism' or refusal to fully co-operate with a discussion on stress (Blackman, 2004).

2.5. Limitations of the Pilot Study and Implications for the Main Study

2.5.1. Participants

The Pilot Study was limited in that it contained a manager population of one. This did not allow peer group support or anonymity for the manager amongst the participants. For the Main Study it was important to recruit a management group or team in order to increase the reliability and validity of results provided by a larger sample.

2.5.2. Facilitator's Techniques

In the Pilot Study the focus group contained too many participants. In the Main Study smaller groups allowed individuals more opportunity to speak and made more manageable the typing of texts. The larger the number of people speaking on the tape seemed to make transcribing more trying for the typist.

It was a limitation of the Pilot Study that the staff group's responses were uneven in that the researcher as facilitator allowed staff to spend most of their

time answering the first question. Greater experience may have helped address this issue as one of many skills to be learnt in handling group dynamics, not letting one person control the conversation, valuing everyone's contribution and so on. Additional complications, which impinged upon the facilitator's learning process included ensuring that the participants were properly briefed beforehand, checking that the microphone batteries were not flat, ensuring that the tape recorder was switched on and running properly, using the proforma, managing the time, keeping a reflective notebook and bringing the session to a close.

In the Main Study the reflective notebook was not written during the focus group sessions. Instead, in order to able to compile a more comprehensive record, the researcher recorded notes onto a Dictaphone, immediately after each focus group was completed.

It may be reasonable to assume that the Main Study benefited from the researcher's experience as a facilitator, gathered in the Pilot Study.

2.5.3. The Focus Group/Interview Proformas

During the focus group/interview there seemed to be too many questions to cover in the time available, with insufficient opportunity to explore issues in depth, which might have related to Research Sub-Question 1b, on quality and substance of responses. Some of the questions (e.g. Q. 6 for staff and Q.9 for manager about what senior, as opposed to local, manager had done to address stress) seemed too distant. In designing the proformas it was possible that too much emphasis was placed, following Research Sub-Question 1a, on triggering

a sufficient quantity of talk, leading to an assumption that the more questions asked, the more talk would be generated.

Having too many questions to get through in the allocated time made the researcher feel slightly uneasy in the facilitator role, possibly impeding his performance.

In the Pilot Study, the wording of research questions was somewhat general, in terms of quantity (1a) and quality (1b) of data and non-specified, differing views between managers and staff (2c). This in turn led to a rather diffuse set of focus group questions. In the Main Study the research questions were worded more specifically and so there was a clearer link from research questions to focus group questions. The proforma was devised solely from the research questions, as found in other studies such as Monsen (2000). Issues from the literature were introduced at the analysis stage.

Following the Pilot Study, a consultation with a second manager in a similar role (senior EP) indicated that the manager in the Pilot Study may have omitted to state some causes of stress, simply because they were too obvious to mention. For the Main Study a prompt (Q1) was included, "Mention even the obvious causes."

The design of the proformas had implications for the analysis of texts.

2.5.4. Analysis of Transcripts

In the Pilot Study the proformas for managers and staff contained seven questions in common and then the manager's proforma contained an additional four questions. A proforma can provide the basic structure on which a text analysis is based. The structure of the two proformas in the Pilot Study was not

sufficiently systematic, and the additional manager questions were not grouped together. This impeded the analysis.

For the Main Study it was considered that managers and staff should have the same proforma, containing the same list of questions in order to assist a manager-staff comparison of responses. A new proforma, used for both managers and staff, was drawn up for the Main Study, with new prompts to relate to the new questions.

The analysis needed to correspond to the purpose of this research (see section 1.17) to explore whether managers and staff have differing views on work-related stress. The Pilot Study did not have a well structured sequence to follow in building a framework for comparing manager's and staff's views. An important consideration for a manager-staff comparison of views on work-related stress would seem to be the establishing of whether they were agreed on what they mean by that term. A comparison of views on the causes of work-related stress is less meaningful if, say, one party is talking about personal stress. In the Pilot Study participants were not asked for their definition of work-related stress. This was corrected in the Main Study.

There was little systematic use of the literature to help arrive at the wording of codes and so an opportunity was missed to illuminate the transcript analysis. Drawing upon the literature at this point may have helped generate wording for codes which was less parochial, less specific to EPs and more applicable to a wider population of occupational groups. This was corrected in the Main Study .

There were limitations to the technique for storing codes and matching them to chunks of text, used in the Pilot Study. This was carried out manually, with assistance from a copy and paste, word processor facility. The coding

technique was improved in the Main Study with the use of Winmax, a specialised computer programme for qualitative data analysis (Kuckartz, 1998).

2.5.5. Trusting the Data

It was a limitation in the Pilot Study that no systematic, written record was made of participants' responses to the feedback of analysed transcript data. For the Main Study, participants' responses were recorded on paper using a rating scale (see Appendix 2).

2.5.6. Script for Briefing of Participants

In the Pilot Study there was a short script for briefing participants about the purpose of this research (see Appendix 1). It was a limitation of the Pilot Study that the researcher's apprehension about successfully conducting the focus group/interview was heightened by difficulty in remembering all practical features about materials, instructions to participants and the sequence of events to be followed. For the Main Study a list needed to be devised as an aide memoir (see Appendix 2).

The researcher also compiled a briefing sheet containing information about the purpose of the research (see Appendix 2). This basic information needed to be imparted to participants before data gathering. It was written in the form of a script for use by the researcher. It differed from the script used in the Pilot Study in that it provided participants with background information on work-related stress. This was done with the intention of setting the issues fresh in the mind of participants, as a means of assisting the flow of dialogue.

In the Main Study the explanation of confidentiality arrangements was included in the script as a precaution against omitting any essential details (see Appendix 2).

2.6 Conclusions

Exploration of Research Question 1, with a total of 16,203 words of transcript produced, showed that manager and staff sustained a dialogue with the researcher on the subject of work-related stress. Consideration of Research Question 2 revealed that the talk of manager and staff, on the subject of work-related stress, could be recorded and analysed to a point which revealed differing manager-staff views on the causes of work-related stress. The Main Study could be embarked upon, with methods and procedures trialled, and with the researcher more experienced in the techniques of focus group facilitator.

CHAPTER 3

MAIN STUDY

3.1 Rationale and Aims

Following the Pilot Study, it was possible to compare manager-staff views on stress more reliably and in more detail, using teachers, as a more widely represented population on a national scale. In addition to making manager-staff comparisons on the causes of stress, the Main Study attempted to make comparisons on a definition of stress, compare manager-staff perceptions on how stress had been addressed to date and how stress might be dealt with in future.

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 Research Questions

Research Question 3

Do teachers and teacher managers in a primary school differ in their views on work-related stress and, if so, in what ways are they different?

Research Sub-Question 3a

Do teachers and teacher managers express differing views on the causes of work-related stress in teachers?

Research Sub-Question 3b

Do teachers and teacher managers express differing views on a definition of work-related stress?

Research Sub-Question 3c

Do teachers and teacher managers express differing views on what has been done so far to address work-related stress in teachers?

Research Sub-Question 3d

Do teachers and teacher managers express differing views on the ways in which work-related, teacher stress might be addressed in future?

3.2.2. Recruitment of Participants

As in the pilot study with EPs, obtaining a sample of teachers for the main study meant identifying participants from a single workplace, rather than seeking a random sample of participants from a variety of employers in the national population. It was therefore important to identify a school which could be considered as fairly typical and relevant to this study on work-related stress. Using the researcher's judgement of typicality and interest or relevance as the principle for selection is similar to "purposive sampling" (Robson, 1993, p.141).

Seaside Primary School may be considered as fairly typical in that it was a local authority, non-denominational, primary school located in a suburban area, with 400 pupils on roll and an approximately equal proportion of boys and girls. The school was over-subscribed in some year groups.

The head teacher of Seaside Primary School (a pseudonym for the participating school) and the researcher had previous contact. They had worked together as part of a ten-member, stress management study group, within the researcher's employing local authority. This group met twice per school term and its members were drawn from a range of local authority occupations. Seaside Primary School was of interest and relevant to this study in that the head teacher had mentioned to the researcher, during the course of this stress study group, high stress levels within the school.

The researcher approached the head teacher and enquired whether she and her staff might take part in this research. The head subsequently invited the researcher to meet senior colleagues at her school in order to 'sell the idea.' The author gave a presentation to that group, detailing the rationale, purposes and procedures of this research. It was made clear that the researcher's intention was to ask managers and staff the same questions on work-related stress, and compare their responses so that any differing points of view would be illustrated by different answers (see Appendix 2, Briefing Sheet for Participants). Managers would then be in a position to note any differing views between managers and staff and act to address the differences, moving towards a shared manager-staff view, in the hope of reducing work-related stress. Following that presentation, the head and her senior colleagues agreed, on behalf of all staff in the school, to participate in this study.

The participants as initially recruited (see section 3.3.2., Setting Aside Some Data) comprised the entire staff of the school, that is, teacher managers, teaching staff, teaching assistants and support staff (bursar and site manager). The initial list of six focus groups is detailed in Table 3.1., comprising one group

of teacher managers, two groups of teachers, two groups of teaching assistants and a group of support staff.

It was an advantage that the author had previous contact with the head of the participating school in a stress management context. The researcher therefore knew that the head had an existing interest in, and was acquainted with, the management of work-related stress. The research procedure which involved asking teachers and teacher managers the same questions on work-related stress, then comparing answers, may be seen as potentially threatening. It was important that the head be sufficiently motivated to deal with any anxieties and continue to the completion of data gathering. Any token agreement by a head to participate, not accompanied by sufficient motivation, possibly followed by cancellation of appointments for data gathering, would have made the research difficult to complete.

There was a potential disadvantage in that, "Those who welcome you (as a researcher) may do so because they don't get on with other members of the group." (Robson, 1993, p.205). It may have been that the head was an isolated member of the school, with the researcher being perceived by senior and other staff as an ally of the head, rather than an impartial investigator. This might have made the co-operation of all participants difficult to secure.

The head had stated to the researcher that she believed that work-related stress in her school was associated with communication difficulties (see section 1.10) a factor which had been identified in the school's Ofsted report (Oct. '99). It was possible that the head was referring to difficulties of communication between herself and other managers or staff members. In return for the school's agreeing to participate in this research, the head asked the researcher to assist the school in the formulation of a stress management programme to

address work-related stress in all school staff. The author agreed to do this but it was beyond the scope of this thesis. This request may have emerged from the head's own agenda on communication difficulties with her staff which she may have been unable to discuss with her own colleagues.

3.2.3. Purpose Explained, Confidentiality and Rapport

At the start of each focus group the purpose of the research was carefully explained to each group of participants (see Appendix 2, Briefing Sheet for Participants). This allowed some opportunity for interaction between participants and researcher. Members of teachers and teacher managers groups seemed keen to participate, reducing the need for extensive rapport building.

The arrangements for confidentiality were explained using the principle of anonymity. In The Main Study, with several managers involved, anonymity was extended to include managers. Some key issues on work-related stress were outlined and briefly discussed with participants. The sequence of events involving feedback of analysed data to participants was described and clarified as appropriate (see Appendix 2, Briefing Sheet for Participants).

3.2.3.1. Ethical Issues

Confidentiality and avoiding deception were addressed as in the Pilot Study (see section 2.2.5.1.).

There was an issue of consent to participate (BPS, 1993, para. 3.6) which was not fully resolved. Agreement to participate in this research was given to the researcher at a meeting including the head of the school and her senior

management team. Agreement to participate was given on behalf of all staff in the school, but the researcher did not seek agreement, face to face, beyond the head and senior management team.

The head and senior colleagues were in a "position of authority" (BPS, 1993, p.9) which enabled them to commit all staff as participants. There was a sense in which the researcher took advantage of this and it was not certain that all members of staff had explicitly consented to take part.

On the other hand, it may be assumed that the head was acting in the best interests of her staff. The researcher's agreement to the head's request to help construct a stress management programme, based on the data gathered in The Main Study, meant that the staff might benefit and not be disadvantaged by their participation.

3.2.4. Materials

3.2.4.1. Briefing Sheet for Participants

The researcher's script in the Pilot Study was replaced with a more comprehensive Briefing Sheet for Participants (see Appendix 2).

3.2.4.2. Devising the Focus Group Questions

The literature reviewed in Chapter 1 led to the research question, which led to research sub-questions which led to the wording of the focus group questions. For additional considerations on devising the focus group questions see sections 2.5.3 and 2.5.4.

3.2.4.3. The Focus Group Proforma.

In The Main Study the list of focus group questions for teacher managers and teachers was similar, allowing a direct comparison of teacher manager and teacher responses to each question.

Focus Group Questions for Teacher Managers	Focus Group Questions for Staff
Warm-up: facilitator ensures all participants are clear about purpose of the research and confidentiality arrangements	
Q1. What causes work-related stress in your staff? Prompts Please just say what the causes/sources of stress are: mention even the obvious causes; as you know this research is confidential; feel free to talk. Say some more about that – how does that stress staff – how does it make them feel they can't cope? Please clarify. What leads you to think that? What are the underlying root causes of these stress inducing factors?	Q1. What causes work-related stress in you? Prompts Please just say what the sources of stress/stressors are: mention even the obvious causes ; as you know this research is confidential; feel free to talk. Say some more about that – how does that stress you – how does it make you feel you can't cope? Please clarify. What leads you to think that? What are the underlying root causes of these stress inducing factors?
Q 2. What is your definition of work-related stress? Prompts. How would you describe or define work-related stress? Is work-related stress a serious issue or just a fad? As managers do you believe that work-related stress is simply the ordinary pressure of hard work? Please clarify. What leads you to think that?	Q 2. What is your definition of work-related stress? Prompts. How would you describe or define work-related stress? Is work-related stress a serious issue or just a fad? Do you believe work-related stress is simply the ordinary pressure of hard work? Please clarify. What leads you to think that?
Q 3. What has been done so far to deal with work-related stress in staff? Prompts. Do you get a chance to discuss stress with your staff at routine staff meetings? Which have been the priority stressors you have discussed with your staff? Has it been possible to take any action aimed at reducing staff stress? Did the action make a difference? Please clarify. What leads you to think that?	Q 3. What has been done so far to deal with your work-related stress? Prompts. Do your managers get a chance to discuss stress with you at routine staff meetings? Which have been the priority stressors your managers have discussed with you? Has it been possible to take any action aimed at reducing staff stress? Did the action make a difference? Please clarify. What leads you to think that?
Q 4. What is the best way to deal with staff's work-related stress in future? Prompts. Do staff try too hard to put a brave face on things – say they are not under stress when they really are? Is it easy for you to know how to help them? Please clarify. What leads you to think that? What should be done to prevent stress arising in the first place – rather than deal with it after it has happened?	Q 4. What is the best way to deal with your work-related stress in future? Prompts. Do staff try too hard to put a brave face on things – say they are not under stress when they really are? Is it easy for managers to know how to help you? Please clarify. What leads you to think that? If you had the chance of a quiet word with your manager(s) what would you ask them to do to help you? What should be done to prevent stress arising in the first place – rather than deal with it after it has happened?

The wording of the focus group questions refers to 'staff' not specifically 'teachers' because transcripts were made for all school staff (see section 3.3.2.).

3.2.4.4. Supplementary Questions

Out of courtesy, not related to research questions, following Qs 1-4, teacher managers were asked to state the causes of their own work-related stress. In order to end each focus group on a positive note, teacher managers and teachers were asked to state the positive aspects of working in this school.

3.2.4.5. Researcher's Aide Memoir

In order to ensure that the researcher provided participants with all essential information, about the purpose of the research and so on, an aide memoir was devised (see Appendix 2, Researcher's Aide Memoir). This was a list for the researcher to take to the focus group interview sessions. The list included a revised version of the script used in the Pilot Study explaining the purpose of this research, focus group questions, pencils, cassette tapes, tape recorder, instructions to participants and the sequence of events of the data gathering session.

3.2.4.6. Other Materials

Guidelines for conducting the focus groups were as the Pilot Study. The reflective notebook, transcribed from Dictaphone recordings made at the end of each session is shown in Appendix 2. A different tape recorder was used (see section 3.3.1).

3.2.5. Techniques and Bias in Interviewing

Facilitator techniques and bias in interviewing were as in the Pilot Study.

3.2.6. Procedure

The list of points on key work-related stress issues was read out to each focus group, expanded as required and discussed briefly as appropriate (see Appendix 2, Briefing Sheet for Participants). This took around 10 minutes in each of the focus groups.

Each focus group was conducted by the researcher using the list of questions set out earlier. The talk of each group was audio taped and transcribed, as in the Pilot Study.

The focus groups for teacher managers and teachers each lasted around 45 minutes.

3.3. Transcript Analysis

In assigning codes to segments of text the rationale was the same as shown in Figure 2.1. The researcher was guided by the text and by the literature. The literature informed the coding process and then, at a later stage, aided interpretation of the analysis of texts. Strauss and Corbin (1998) suggest that use of literature can, "...enhance, rather than constrain theory development." (p.49). It is possible that familiarity with relevant literature enhances sensitivity to the data, rather than blocking creativity. There is the potential benefit that the findings could be used to confirm the literature and vice versa. There is the

prospect of using findings to critique the literature in areas where it is simplistic or insufficient (Strauss & Corbin,1998).

The term, literature is used in a wide sense, to include reports, manuscripts and biographies, or in this case an Ofsted (Oct. '99) report, rather than journal articles alone. The main work-related stress issues (see section 1.1) were summarised into Table Ap 2.3 (see Appendix 2). This meant that issues could easily be referred to and, to some degree, be memorised and kept in mind whilst coding the texts.

3.3.1. Stages of Analysis

1. The dialogue for each separate focus group was audio taped and transcribed as in the Pilot Study. Numbering of each line turned out to be unnecessary as the computer programme, referred to later, automatically numbered the lines when the transcript was imported. Names and any other details which might have identified individuals were deleted from the transcript (see Appendix 2 for transcript samples).

A different tape recorder was used, of similar quality to the Pilot Study, but speech seemed less clearly recorded. The participants appeared to talk at lower volume possibly as a result of being guarded about what they were saying. The outcome of these factors combined, meant that the typist had great difficulty, from the outset, in transcribing the tapes. The author had to listen to all the tapes and then dictate to the typist. This was time consuming, taking around 25 hours altogether, but the advantage was that the author was satisfied that all the tapes were typed with complete accuracy.

2. The original transcripts were kept on the computer, in Word, and in hard copy. All analysis in the form of annotations, highlighting and sorting was done within the Winmax computer programme (Kuckartz, 1998). The transcripts in Word and on paper were left untouched and remained safely intact.

3. In the same way as the Pilot Study, for the Main Study it was necessary to carry out a logical content analysis. It was necessary to bring into sharp focus from the transcripts, what teacher managers and teachers were talking about. The Pilot Study sequence of reading the transcripts, identifying themes of emotional, factual significance and so on, establishing tentative codes and refining these into finalised codes, was also followed in the Main Study. The Winmax terms, 'text segment' or 'coded segment', will now be adopted, replacing the term, chunk of text, used in the Pilot Study. (See Appendix 2, for samples of Winmax .

4. In Step 1 of the coding process (see Table 3.1) the first 200 out of 1,525 lines of transcript for teaching assistants (TAs Group 1) (see section 3.3.2., Setting Aside Some Data) were read and tentative codes were assigned. The coding process continued in cycles of 200 lines.

5. In Step 2 the teacher managers text was read, also the first 200 out of 1342 lines of text, and tentative codes assigned in the same way.

6. Each set of 200 lines referred to above, was then re-read (Table 3.1, Steps 3 and 4). For each code, its list of assigned segments of text was read through to check that each segment was accurately placed under that code. Revisions

included removing a text segment from the coding process, assigning it to an alternative code, and changing the name of a code. This corresponded to the sequence from tentative codes to finalised codes in the Pilot Study.

7. As each succeeding set of 200 lines was analysed the researcher attempted to be as flexible as possible in assigning codes, guided by the literature, but not limited by it. The sequence of coding, in 200 line cycles, allowed a code discovered, for example, in the teacher managers' group to be provisionally placed in the list of codes for teachers. This acted as a prompt to the researcher to note text segments in a given focus group which might be usefully compared to segments in another focus group. A list of codes enabling comparison of text segments between focus groups evolved in this way (see Table 3.5 for a comparison between managers and teachers).

Table 3.1. Coding audit trail: steps 1-17

Focus Group ⇩	Step 1 Lines coded	Step 2 Lines coded	Step 3 Lines coded	Step 4 Lines coded	Step 5 Lines coded	Step 6 Lines coded	Step 7 Lines coded	Step 8 Lines coded	Step 9 Lines coded	Step 10 Lines coded	Step 11 Lines coded	Step 12 Lines coded
Techr Mngrs		1-200		1-200			200-400			400-600		
Teach Gp1					1-200			200-400			400-600	
Teach Gp2												
TAs Gp 1	1-200		1-200			200-400			400-600			600-800
TAs Gp 2												
Suppt Staff												

3.3.2. Setting Aside Some Data

In order to comply with the head's request for a stress training programme for all staff, the author needed to gather data, by carrying out focus group interviews and analysis of transcripts on all staff members, in addition to those shown in Tables 3.2 and 3.3. Total staff data could inform a programme to be designed at a later stage, beyond the scope of this thesis.

In order to fulfil the purpose of this thesis it was sufficient to select one of the staff groups for comparison with the group of teacher managers. Teachers were the group selected as the staff group with the widest responsibilities. Teachers were represented in the literature reviewed in Chapter 1, which aided interpretation of findings. The quantity of focus group transcript data from ten teaching assistants, a bursar and a site manager was beyond the scope of this thesis and therefore set aside.

Two separate teachers' groups were available for selection. A group comprising five teachers was selected (Teachers Group 1). Data from a group comprising two teachers (Teachers Group 2) was set aside because their transcript data was not rich. One of these teachers was initially unwilling to participate in a tape recorded dialogue with the researcher (see Appendix 2, Reflective Notebook).

3.3.3. Characteristics of Participants

In Table 3.2. the term 'Teacher managers' refers to the school's head teacher plus other senior teaching staff including deputy head, special educational needs co-ordinator and curriculum co-ordinators.

Table 3.2. Teacher managers' characteristics

Teacher managers Male/Female	Age	Years of service	Ethnic group
F	41	18	White British
F	44	23	White British
F	45	8 ½	White British
F	50	28	White British
F	34	12	White British
M	39	11	White British

Table 3.3. Teachers' characteristics

Teachers M/F	Age	Years of service	Ethnic group
M	38	13	White British
F	30	9	White British
F	51	9	White British
F	22	2	White British
F	27	4 ½	White British

The female to male ratio was comparable to that found in the national population of teaching staff in primary schools (Department for Education and Employment [DfEE] 2000).

3.3.4. Some Examples of Coding

Figure 3.1 shows the managers' talk in response to Focus Group, Question 1 (Q1)

"What causes work-related stress in your staff?" (lines 4-5).

The first text segment following was:

"Well, hours of work." (line 6).

This was coded as *Heavy workload/no time.* The researcher prompted (line 7) and the prompt was followed by the text segment:

"Major." (line 8).

After another prompt from the researcher (line 9) there followed the text segment:

"Things like report writing, initiatives, change without proper training etc., etc." (lines 10-11).

The latter two segments of text were also given the code, *Heavy workload/no time.*

The code, *Heavy workload/no time* was the most frequently occurring code; 40 times in the first 200 lines of this transcript and 50 times in total. This code was allocated to further segments such as:

"General workload" (lines 24-25).

"I mean saying.....[name] you said the hours." (line 27).

"Workload, the number of hours." (line 28).

"Yes it's workload." (line 29).

"Then there is also just no non time, complete off time, you might if your lucky be busy doing other stuff on Saturday....." (lines 62-64).

".....but then you're back on Sunday to planning again." (line 66).

The text segment:

"Poorly managed change." (line 12)

seemed to be of a different nature to a statement of workload or amount of work. The researcher prompted (line 13) to seek clarification, inviting an expansion. This prompt triggered the text segment:

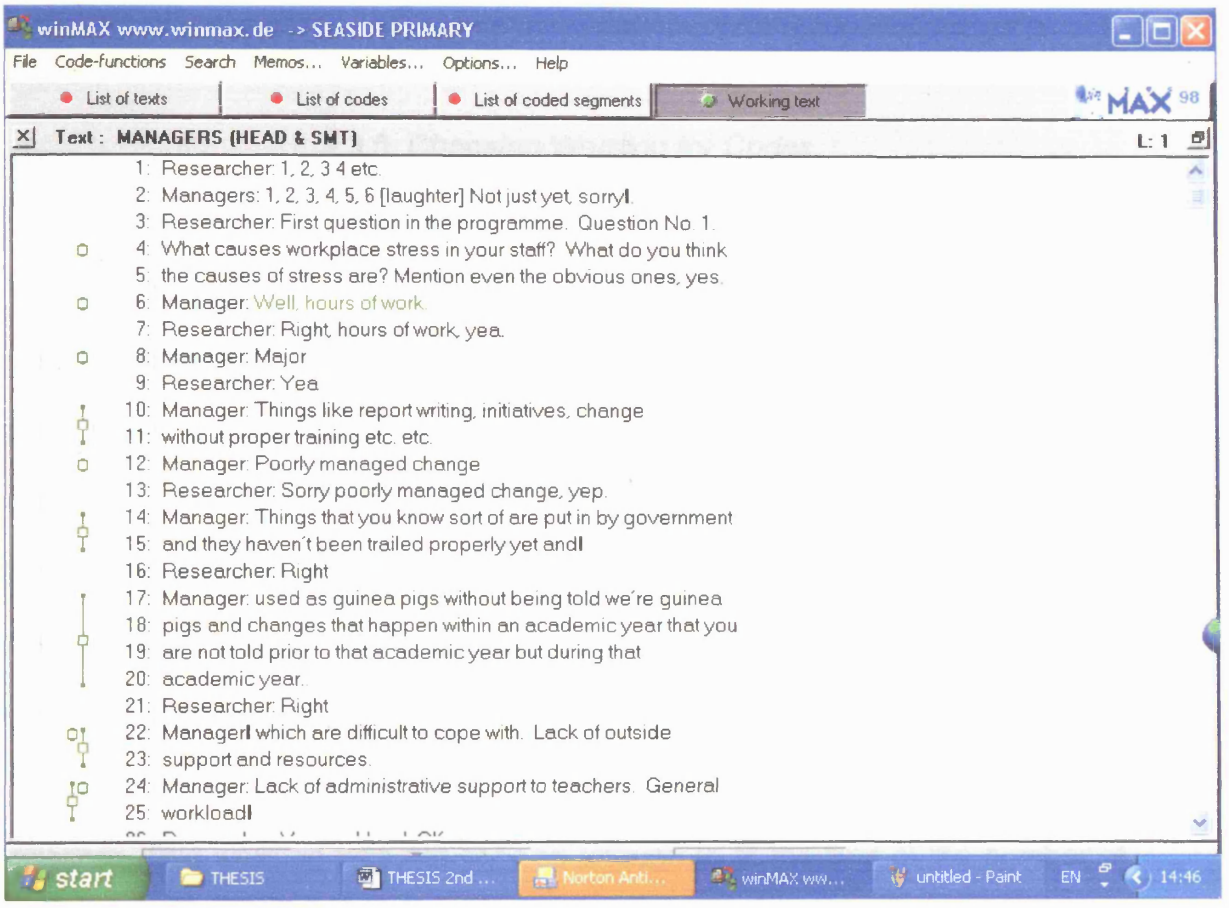
"Things that you know sort of are put in by government and they haven't been trialled properly yet and....." (lines 14-15).

Another prompt from the researcher (line 16) triggered what appeared to be an unpacking of the previous comment:

" ...used as guinea pigs without being told we're guinea pigs and changes that happen within an academic year that you are not told prior to that academic year but during that academic year...." (lines 17-20).

The references above to *guinea pigs* and *haven't been trialled properly* gave an impression of new ideas and being experimented upon. References to *not told prior* and *poorly managed change* produced a sense of being taken aback, overwhelmed or overloaded. The combination of novelty and overload seemed to suggest the code, *Initiative overload* which was assigned to the above three segments of text spanning lines 12-20.

Figure 3.1. Sample of managers' transcript



The code, *Not enough control of own work, was allocated to* the text segment:

"……..so much happens within a school day that within a day you can feel out of control." (lines 148-149).

Under this code were also included segments such as:

"It's the unmanageability, I think." (line 185).

"……..of tasks and what is accepted and expectations all round. You know, it's very difficult if you looked at the whole job." (lines 185-189).

There were occasions when it seemed appropriate to code the murmur, ***"Um,"*** as a bland segment of text which seemed to reinforce a previous segment. Bland segments of text were given the same code as the segment immediately preceding. For example, ***"Um"*** (line 133) was coded, *Not enough control of my work*, because it appeared to reinforce the segment immediately

before it, ***"Meantime my classroom is increasingly getting out of control."*** (lines 131-2).

3.3.5. Choosing Wording for Codes

In the convention of codes, each code needed to be worded concisely and clearly. The list of codes provided a concise framework for feeding back to participants an analysis of what they had said. Codes may provide a starting point from which targets for a future stress management programme, tailored to this school, might emerge. The wording of each code needed to be of a positive tone in order to engage the interest of school staff and turn their minds towards stress management targets.

For example, a code might be worded as, *Teachers complaints about staff meetings.* This wording was not concise enough to fit the limit of the number of characters and spaces which Winmax allows for one code (29). This wording also sounds emotive, negative and may not inspire managers to bring about change. The interest of participants might be better engaged by the more neutral code wording, *Meetings.*

3.3.6. Researcher Bias in Analysis

As in the Pilot Study it was important to keep an open mind and maintain as wide a range of coding possibilities open for as long as possible. In assigning codes there was a risk of starting with too many preconceived ideas. Caution is advised; "...a researcher does not want to enter the field with an entire list of concepts...." (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p.49).

The head considered that communication amongst school staff would be a suitable issue to be addressed by a stress management programme (see section 3.2.2). Intervention was beyond the scope of this thesis, but it was important that any communication issues related to stress were allowed to emerge, if present. This research attempted to produce information which could inform and empower the participants to construct an intervention in future (Salmon, 2003).

In assigning codes the researcher was aware of the possibility of bias from being too aware of communication as a possible stressor, too keen to word codes in such a way as to comply with the head teacher's perceptions and stray from the content of the text.

The potential for bias arose from a tendency to follow too closely, stress issues in the literature. The researcher had expected to find that salary might be a stress related issue (GTC, 2002; Travers & Cooper, 1996). Some time was spent considering this but it was not apparent in the transcripts.

In carrying out the analysis the researcher strove to be guided mainly by the text, whilst keeping in mind the literature, research questions and so on as shown in Figure 2.1 (A rationale for coding).

3.3.7. Trusting the Data

As in the Pilot Study, the data was authenticated by feeding it back to the participants from whom it emerged. After the data had been analysed the researcher visited the school, several months later, to feedback the findings. By this stage the head was on long term sick leave and the deputy was acting head.

The feedback session with participants took place before the decision was taken to set aside data. The feedback session therefore involved all participants from each of the six, initial focus groups.

In order to preserve the necessary confidentiality, the researcher fed back to each single group, the data for that group only. Over the course of one working day, each group of participants was given a 45 minute session comprising presentation and discussion of data. This schedule was agreed in consultation with the school, as the only feasible allocation of time from the school's point of view.

The presentation was assisted by projecting Winmax data samples from a laptop computer onto a screen. A complete discussion of all codes and how they were decided upon, was not possible in the time allocated by the school. In any case, such a detailed discussion may not have been an appropriate method of interacting with school staff. It may have been perceived as tedious, adding to their stress.

One purpose of the feedback session was to check for validity. Participants' reactions were requested on whether the analysis of the transcripts (the wording of the codes and the text segments placed under each of them) was an accurate reflection of what had been said.

Reliability, that is, were text segments which implied a particular theme, consistently assigned to a given code, was not separately checked for, as would have been the case if a second coder had been used (Robson, 1993). This thesis is open to criticism on those grounds.

The feedback session with participants took place whilst the plan to carry out a post thesis intervention was still in place. A second purpose of the feedback to participants was to gather participants' views on whether the codes which they

were shown would be useful in devising an in-school programme to reduce work-related stress.

Before each group presentation (see Appendix 2, Trusting the Data) the author reminded participants of the purposes of the feedback session .

The presentation started by showing codes and their corresponding text segments following the supplementary question, ***What are the positive aspects of working here?*** This allowed the feedback session to start on a positive note. Comments were invited on the wording of the codes and whether the text segments seemed to correspond sufficiently to the codes. A similar sequence was followed with responses to Q1, referring to causes of staff's stress, and Q4, relating to what should be done about staff stress in future. Additional codes and their text segments were selected and expanded upon at the suggestion of participants or the researcher.

Participants seemed to engage readily with the on-screen projection of the Winmax data and seemed interested in seeing the work done in analysing their talk. Some participants spontaneously read aloud from the segments of text on the screen. It seemed that many were amused at seeing their own words and opinions reflected back to them.

Each group of participants agreed that their data could be shown to the other groups.

3.3.7.1. Participants' Responses during Code Authentication

No participant disputed the wording chosen for any code or objected to the inclusion of any text segment under a given code.

Participants views were recorded individually by inviting each participant to complete a rating scale. Responses indicated: 89.5% of participants rated the analysis as very accurate/accurate as a summary of their views; 84.2% of participants rated the analysis as very useful/useful for the purpose of devising a future stress management programme for the school (see Appendix 2).

Participants' comments during the session included reference to a reduction in work-related stress since the researcher's initial visit to the school. Teachers mentioned improved structure for staff meetings and an increase in non-contact time. (As part of data subsequently set aside, support staff mentioned increased help from teacher managers in prioritising jobs and less pressure from parents. Teaching assistants (TAs) mentioned the instigation of meetings specifically for them, but this move was apparently resented by teachers, as the amount of TA time in the classroom was correspondingly reduced).

There seemed to have been a "Hawthorne" effect in operation here. The researcher's initial visit to the school was to gather data. No intervention had taken place.

3.3.7.2. Adding Value

There would seem to be agreement above, on the part of participants, that the analysis was an accurate reflection of what they said, and a useful basis for devising a stress management programme for the school. The researcher and the acting head agreed a date later in the same school term, for further discussion on the design and implementation of a stress management programme. The acting head's willingness to use the analysed data as a basis

for intervention might imply that data had been analysed to a point where it could inform others, not only the researcher (Salmon, 2003).

3.4 Results

3.4.1. Research Sub-Question 3a

For teacher managers and teachers, the total amount of transcript was 19,744 words. The total word count for each group was similar (see Table 3.4.).

Table 3.4. Transcript details

Teacher Managers	Teachers
6 participants Words:10,240 Lines: 1,340	5 participants Words: 9,504 Lines: 1,199

The percentage of text coded was: teacher managers, 78%; teachers, 64% (see Appendix 2).

For the teacher managers the talk seemed evenly distributed amongst five out of six members of the group. The sixth member, the only male, was silent for much of the dialogue. When invited by the researcher to make a contribution he replied briefly.

For the teachers' group the talk seemed fairly evenly distributed amongst participants with little imbalance related to age, years of service or gender.

The codes were grouped under headings in accordance with how naturally they fell into categories of work-related stressors suggested by Palmer, Cooper

and Thomas (2001) (see Table 3.5.). The effectiveness or otherwise of communication amongst the staff in the school and the way in which meetings were conducted seemed to be part of the culture of the school. It seemed that the beliefs which staff formed about the general public's view of them and their own view of themselves, that is their self esteem, also helped to form the social atmosphere or ethos of the school. These codes were classified as culture. The inclusion of pupils with special educational needs represented an increasing demand, requiring continuing curriculum adjustments. Inclusion was categorised as, change, and so on.

Table 3.5. Focus Group Q1:

comparison of views

What causes work-related stress in teachers?		
Codes	Teacher Managers	Teachers
	% of total Q1 coded segments	% of total Q1 coded segments
Culture		
Lack of communication	3.1	23.5
Staff meetings	0	10.0
General public's perception	6.8	2.9
Low self esteem	0	5.9
Change		
Inclusion	0.6	0
Initiative overload	5.6	0.6
Control		
Not enough control of own work	27.9	8.2
School's budget constraints	4.9	2.9
Demands		
Targets (curriculum)	9.3	1.2
Heavy workload/no time	31.1	11.8
Support		
Lack of time for peer support	6.8	7.6
Parents non-supportive	0.6	7.1
Lack of support from outside	1.9	2.4
Relationships		
Working relationships	0.6	8.2
Children's behaviour and attitude	0.6	7.6

The code frequencies were noted and the codes weighted using the same method as in the Pilot Study (see section 2.3.5.).

3.4.1.1. Overview

The relative frequency of each theme (or code) gives an impression of its significance for the speaker (Eiser, 1978). As in the Pilot Study, an overview of any differing manager-staff views is available from comparing manager-staff code frequencies, expressed as a percentage of total number of coded chunks of text for Q1.

When teachers were asked about the causes of their own stress, they most frequently mentioned: lack of communication, for example, from their managers about requirements for reporting on children's progress; a heavy workload, often requiring more tasks to be completed than time allowed; requirements to attend staff meetings, which they found could be unproductive.

As stated by teacher managers, the most frequent causes of teachers' stress were: a heavy workload; not having enough control of their own work, with a sense of not being able to prevent work overflowing into their personal lives; joint third were, lack of time for peer support and the general public's perception of the school's curriculum performance and teachers' seemingly short working hours.

An overall impression is one of differing views on causes of teacher stress, with teachers and teacher managers having a different list of priorities, with some agreement on one of the themes or codes concerned with a heavy workload and time constraints.

3.4.1.2. Similar Views of Teachers and Teacher Managers

Teachers most frequently identified communication difficulties or lack of communication as a cause of their stress. Concerns emerged at an early stage in the dialogue (line 15) and, despite the introduction of other themes, such as heavy workload and not having enough control of their work, the theme of communication as a source of teacher stress was reintroduced repeatedly.

"Lack of communication." (line 15)

"I think sometimes as well people assume you know things that you don't... like oh, you know, the reports are due in three weeks time." (lines 66-70)

".....things like, you know, reviews for IEPs and things like that, it's like, you'll be asked have you done them, but you won't be told beforehand that you need to....."(lines 79-81).

Teacher managers' text segments indicated that they have acknowledged communication as a stress issue which has not been successfully addressed.

" .....it comes down to that communication level.....um, then there is a problem isn't there.....because that's what's causing the stress." (lines 772-774).

"Do you not think that part of the problem is that it comes back all the time this.....there's not enough time to communicate...." (lines 1211-1213).

In the managers' text, references to communication were less frequent, compared to teachers and emerged later, in the middle or towards the end of their transcript (1340 lines in total). This left an impression that, whilst managers acknowledged communication as a stressor for teachers, they found this to be a difficult admission. It seemed that, in order to broach this subject, effort was required to overcome some of their own defensiveness (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Argyris, 1990).

Communication difficulties between managers and staff have been suggested as reasons for the poor performance of stress management interventions (Nytro et al, 2000).

Heavy workload/no time was the first issue to which teachers referred as a cause of their stress (line 5). This was teachers' second most frequently mentioned source of stress. Within this area of concern were included factors such as completing paperwork and dealing with parents. The detrimental effect of a heavy workload on memory, resulting in omitting to bring essential books and resources for use in a lesson, was described. The struggle to interact with, and support teacher colleagues within workload constraints, was also noted in the transcript.

"Lack of time." (line 5)

"The amount of work that we have to cover." (line 470)

"Not enough time to do all the paperwork, yes." (line 489)

"I mean working in Year 6, the amount of marking that you have to do for SATS....." (line 494)

"...is phenomenal, isn't it, you spend hours and hours and hours" (line 498).

For teacher managers, heavy workload/no time was the first stressor mentioned (line 6) and the most frequently mentioned as a cause of stress for teachers, possibly indicating that managers gave this greater emphasis than teachers.

"Well hours of work..." (line 6)

"People are very tired, they are very unready to work with children during the day because they are hung over and tired from the previous night's, you know, work that has been carried on. There are an awful lot of things that have to be done outside the classroom." (lines 46-50).

Heavy workload for teachers was not confined to people in senior posts or those making special efforts to gain promotion. Teacher managers emphasised that, contrary to what might be the general public's perception, a heavy workload was the usual routine, required to complete their basic duties.

Heavy workload recurred in the managers' transcript, interwoven with other issues such as poorly managed change, new initiatives without proper training and lack of administrative support. Heavy workload in general and paperwork in particular, have been identified as causes of stress in teachers (GTC, 2002).

Teachers were concerned about the stressful effects of having insufficient control over their work on a continuum which extended from the classroom level to externally imposed national curriculum requirements.

"Certainly lack of space in the classroom, especially with very young children, when you've got thirty, and they're all on top of each other [inaudible] all this kind of thing, very stressful." (lines 452-455).

"You can't space it out, you can't, you know, it happens [the yearly cycle of curriculum requirements] at certain times of the year." (lines 505-506).

For managers, the issue of teachers' lack of control over their own work was the second most frequently expressed source of stress.

"No matter what level of staff you are, you know, what they are expected to do .....pretty much unmanageable...which is where you get the overspill, you know, you have to do it outside of school hours, and all the rest of it, and you end up living and breathing and everything else in the job." (lines 191-196).

Lack of control over one's own work has been identified as a source of stress (Tattersall & Farmer, 1995; Jimmieson, 2000; Troup & Dewe, 2002). Perceived control is usually seen as ameliorating a sense of stress (Spector, 1998).

Teachers expressed a need for more extended, supportive contact with peers. These comments started to emerge at an early stage (line 121) after

disappointment was expressed about routine staff meetings, with many agenda items not considered sufficiently relevant to the whole teacher group.

"I think , yea, perhaps another thing could be lack of time to actually talk about issues" (lines 121-123)

".....amongst yourselves that aren't you know, you don't have enough time, people finish their classwork, they've got things to do and then go home so you don't have time to sort of discuss and perhaps on a friendly basis or whatever." (lines 125-128).

A lack of peer group support was perceived by managers as a contributor to teacher stress. This concern emerged at an early stage (line 72) and followed comments on heavy workload.

"Yes and I think also that is also lack of support because you haven't got your colleague or somebody else to talk to about it, you are then at home and dealing with issues and trying to put things together. There isn't enough time for us to talk....." (lines72-76).

High organizational stress levels can disrupt peer communication and make it less frequent. Supportive peer relationships can reduce levels of work-related stress (Cooper, Cooper & Eaker, 1988). Peer group contact, as a means of dealing with work-related stress, is valuable and often takes place on an informal basis (Martin, 1998; Nytro et al, 2000).

3.4.1.3. Differing Views of Teachers and Teacher Managers

Teachers experienced difficulty with children's behaviour and attitude as a source of stress. This concern first arose following a description of memory difficulties occurring under heavy workload. References to difficult behaviour in children were interspersed with comments on low self esteem.

"I think the other thing that works.....I find quite stressful is you know, the attitude of the children as well. " (lines 296-297).

"The fact that we....we demand....we sort of earn so little respect from them generally." (lines 299-300).

Managers did not appear to share teachers' concerns, making only one reference to children's behaviour.

"We've got elements as well, I mean not particularly here, but I've experienced it in the past, you've got elements." (lines 332-333).

The manager's comment was made in a somewhat detached way. Difficult, stress inducing behaviour in children was acknowledged, but not as a major concern and not necessarily in this school. Children's behaviour has been identified as a source of stress in teachers (GTC, 2002)

Teachers found that difficult or non-supportive parents were a cause of stress. This was the second cause of stress referred to by teachers (line 6). This issue was mentioned immediately following a reference to heavy workload/no time, but then appeared to briefly take precedence over that issue, being mentioned four times in close succession by successive speakers.

"Unsupportive parents, parents that criticise you or have a go at you..." (lines 7-8).

"....threaten you physically." (line 10).

"....or verbally." (line 13).

"It's lack of support from the parents." (line 374).

Managers made one reference to the issue of non-supportive parents, following expression of concern about the general public's perceptions and curriculum targets.

"Parents, you know, asking questions." (line 374).

The emotional tone of the manager's comment about parents seems less intense by comparison with teachers' reports of confrontational encounters. Difficult relationships with parents has been identified as an area of concern in teacher stress (GTC, 2002).

Teachers did not appear to view curriculum targets as an obvious cause of stress. They appeared to have been offered, and accepted reassurance from manager(s) that they should do their best to attain targets, but not be unduly concerned were these not achieved.

"She puts it in perspective and she says, well, if we're not going to get....we're not going to get to our targets...." (lines 801-802).

"Or we can justify why we get low targets...." (line 804).

Managers referred to targets at an earlier stage (line 191, compared to line 801 for teachers) possibly indicating a sense of more pressing concern on this issue as a cause of stress in teachers.

"I mean targets are set year on year without any judgement on cohorts or the number of special needs, you know, we were more inclusive, we have far more children in our schools now." (lines 405-408).

"But it is....for a lot of teachers, um, it is still a hard, hard pill to swallow to have targets that you know are not achievable." (lines 433-435).

These references were interwoven with comments on teachers not having enough control of their work, having their work overflowing outside school hours and work becoming too dominant an influence throughout the teachers' lives.

Managers' perception that targets are stressful to teachers, when teachers do not appear to hold the same view, may reflect differing manager-staff values (Daniels, 1996; Martin, 1998) on targets and related issues such as the school's position in a league table. A target driven culture has been identified as a source of stress in teachers (GTC, 2002).

3.4.1.4. Managers' View Unknown

Managers did not refer to staff meetings as a cause of stress in teachers, but teachers had concerns in this area. When required to attend routine staff meetings in school, teachers seemed to have a sense that time was not used productively and stress resulted from being kept from other pressing work which they needed to complete.

"When you're at a meeting.....you've got loads of things that you want to do and you're sitting there listening to things that are nothing to do with you." (lines 97-99).

"Listening to people discuss things or going through things and they're nothing to do with you and you just want to go." (lines 102-104).

"And people start to talk about things that aren't relevant." (lines 120-121).

There was an impression that teacher stress arising from staff meetings could be readily addressed if teachers' views were listened to by managers. Teachers' anxieties about time wasted in staff meetings were left unresolved, causing further stress (Nytro et al, 2000).

Managers did not refer to the possibility of low self esteem in teachers and its implications for teacher stress. Teachers referred to their low self esteem (Teacherline, 2001) following talk about children's behaviour and attitude.

".....that we don't really, you know, we're nothing, we don't really count (lines 305-306).

"....you are very inferior." (line 313)

"....vulnerable." (line 314).

At this point teachers seemed to move on to a view that they were treated poorly by society in general. These comments were closely followed by

references to their heavy workload. There was an impression of a sense of injustice arising from not being highly rated by the community despite working hard on its behalf (Adams, 1963; Guerts et al, 1999; Novelli et al, 1995; Taris et al, 2002; Truchot et al, 2001).

When teachers have concerns or anxieties about causes of stress, but managers' view on these issues are unknown, teachers' anxieties are left unresolved, which may be a further cause of stress (Nytro et al, 2000).

3.4.1.5. Summary

The three components which emerged in the Pilot Study appeared to be replicated in the Main Study. In both studies there seemed to be agreement between managers and staff on some of the causes of staff stress, areas where managers and staff's viewpoints differed and staff's stressors on which managers' views were not known (see Table 3.6.).

Table 3.6. Summary: Focus Group Q1

Causes of Teacher Stress		
Teachers and managers agree	Teachers and managers differ	Managers' views not known
Lack of communication	Children's behaviour and attitude	Low self esteem
Not enough control of own work	Parents non-supportive	Staff meetings
Heavy workload/no time	Targets (curriculum)	
Lack of time for peer support		

One area of agreement between teachers and teacher managers was lack of communication in school as a source of stress. This had been the main cause of stress identified by the head teacher in discussions with the researcher prior to starting the Main Study (see section 3.2.2).

Teachers and teacher managers described teacher stress arising from children's behaviour, unsupportive parents and curriculum targets, but teachers and teacher managers have differing viewpoints; they have different perspectives on these issues as causes of stress in teachers.

Research Sub-Question 3a: *Do teachers and teacher managers express differing views on the causes of work-related stress in teachers?* This appeared to be answered in the affirmative.

3.4.2. Research Sub-Question 3b

The HSE (2003) definition of work-related stress was the model adopted in this thesis (see section 1.2.2.). Work-related stress is defined as, "The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed upon them." (HSE, 2003, p.1).

Table 3.7. Focus Group Q2:
comparison of views

What is your definition of work-related stress?		
Codes	Teacher Managers	Teachers
	% of total Q2 coded segments	% of total Q2 coded segments
I cannot cope/out of control	23.8	0
I feel tense/anxious	0	5.6
Too much pressure/demands	19.1	22.2
Work-home out of balance	57.1	72.2

The researcher incorporated the literature into the coding process (see Figure 2.1) and had two HSE (1995; 2003) definitions in mind when creating the wording for the first three codes listed in Table 3.7. The HSE (1995) definition was intended to correspond to, *I cannot cope/out of control.* The wording 'adverse reaction' in the HSE (2003) definition was intended to correspond to, *I feel tense/anxious.* Both definitions refer to 'excessive pressure' which was intended to correspond to, *Too much pressure/demands.*

3.4.2.1. Similar Views of Teachers and Teacher Managers

One teacher responded to this question by reflecting on her time as a trainee teacher. She reflected on how her teaching practice was relatively low in stress and attributed this to being allowed to devote her time mainly to classroom teaching, with little need to concern herself with duties outside the classroom such as reporting children's progress, dealing with parents and so on. In defining work-related stress, teachers made references to an excess of pressures and demands placed upon them.

"To me it's a knowing that I've got all these things to be done and I haven't done them. I hate having jobs waiting. I don't mind having jobs to do as long as I know I've done them, but if I've got things that should have been done and they're not.....I'm getting tetchy now 'cos I'm thinking I've got to...you know....." (lines 647-652).

Teacher managers also defined stress in terms of an excess of pressures and demands, although these factors appeared to impinge on managers in a different way. One manager reflected on how an undue workload appeared to diminish her time for reflection and creativity.

".....and I think you could ask any teacher, any manager, and what people are being expected to do is unmanageable in the time given. We are given no quality time to think. We are given no quality time to trial, to actually look at what we have, time for reflection." (lines 530-534).

For teachers, stress was defined in terms of the work-home or 'work-life' balance being tilted towards work, with the greater part of their energy and time absorbed by work.

".....and it's the balance." (line 526)

"The balance of life." (line 527).

"The balance of life and work: exactly that." (line 528).

"...and I don't have time to speak to my friends....." (line 539).

"I mean an example, I'm hopefully going out on Thursday night, to go to the pictures, and yet it's like ooh, going out midweek...." (lines 558-560).

Teacher managers' definition of work-related stress included the same imbalance, resulting in a predomination of work over home life.

"You're saying yea, you're saying that, you know, workplace stress is in the workplace, but it's not, it does overspill." (lines 495-497).

"Um, I think for.....the workload is such that it is, you know, you do take it home. It does enter into your personal life, as you were saying and, in fact, it actually takes over." (lines 513-515).

For teachers and teacher managers, the demands of work and home being out of balance, was the most frequently used way of defining work-related stress.

3.4.2.2. Unknown Views of Teachers and Teacher Managers

Teachers did not seem to refer to a feeling of not being in control, when defining work-related stress. In order to check whether text segments had been coded accurately, a computerised search for the word, control, was carried out in the teachers' transcript. The word, control, occurred only twice in the teachers' transcript and neither of the related segments needed re-coding under definition of stress.

In contrast, teacher managers' use of the terms, not coping or feeling out of control, was their second most frequent means of defining stress.

"It is a feeling within that things are within your control and stress comes when you feel out of your control." (lines 141-142).

"....'cos we've said that stress is a feeling of not coping." (lines 679-680).

"It becomes stressful when you can no longer cope with it and you feel that you're on the hamster wheel and it's whizzing faster and you just can't, you can't keep up with it." (lines 475-477).

Managers did not appear to refer to define stress in terms of feelings. Teachers defined stress in terms of feelings of tension or anxiety.

"Constant little panic inside. Sometimes you can keep it under control and most of the time it's there and you think, yea, this is OK, I know I've got these things to do and sometimes it just, that panic gets too much going." (lines 653-656).

The combined frequency of the two codes (Too much pressure/demands; Work-home out of balance) under which manager-staff agreement was noted, comprised 76.2% of total Q2 coded segments for managers and 94.4% for staff. On a definition of work-related stress, areas of manager-staff agreement seem greater than areas of disagreement or unknown views.

Research Sub-Question 3b: *Do teachers and teacher managers express differing views on a definition of work-related stress?* This appeared to be answered in the negative, that is to say, they seemed to agree on a definition of stress.

3.4.3. Research Sub-Question 3c

Teachers and teacher managers reported informal, peer group contact which was in operation, as a means of dealing with stress. At the same time teachers and their managers acknowledged that, in the workplace, they often hid their feelings and found it embarrassing to admit to stress (see Table 3.8.).

Table 3.8. Focus Group Q3:
comparison of views

What has been done so far to deal with work-related stress in teachers?		
Codes	Teacher Managers	Teachers
	% of total Q3 coded segments	% of total Q3 coded segments
Culture		
Embarrassing to admit to stress	19.1	25.0
Not entitled to say I am stressed	14.3	0
I hide my thoughts and feelings	15.9	30.0
Support		
Peer support is in place	17.5	45.0
Acknowledge lack of formal stress procedures	33.3	0

3.4.3.1. Similar Views of Teachers and Teacher Managers

Teachers and their managers commented on informal arrangements which existed to deal with stress. Immediately following focus group, Question 3, teachers referred to the informal peer group support which was available.

"....at lunchtimes everyone does keep it quite jolly, don't they?" (lines 725-726).

"....tend to find, and, you know, people are laughing." (line 729).

"I think the staff are very supportive of each other, aren't they?" (lines 731-732).

Informal communication appears to be important within organizations, between staff and managers and also within manager and staff groupings (Martin, 1998; Nytro et al, 2000).

The first response of managers to the same question was to talk of an unwillingness to admit to stress.

"I think actually there still is a fear to admit to stress." (lines 676-677).

This was soon followed by comments similar to those of teachers, about the informal support which was available.

"If we're feeling down about something, we will find someone to talk to amongst ourselves." (lines 724-725).

Teachers' and their managers' talk included reference to hiding feelings of stress. Teachers acknowledged that some procedures, instigated by management, led to anxiety and frustration. Lesson planning arrangements were a source of stress, although this had apparently not been mentioned to managers.

".....and so you have this onus on you that have I done enough. Is it good enough?" (lines 694-695).

"Not trusting you to do it properly." (line 696).

Teachers experienced as stressful, attempts by managers to communicate essential information to teachers, but there was an impression that teachers had been unwilling to admit that this was the case.

"That's another thing you see, we get lots of paper in our register. This arrived in the Monday morning register, when you're doing register, dinners, everything else." (lines 767-770).

Teacher managers agreed that feelings were expressed, but this was apparently done in a manner which did not confront or upset anybody (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Argyris, 1990). There appeared to be an expectation that feelings be expressed within an atmosphere of agreement and that feelings of stress were hidden and not expressed.

"But we can actually display our feelings, agree and support, say, 'Yes we all feel the same,' but nobody will say, 'Yes, I really am stressed.' (lines 696-698).

Teachers and their managers tended to hide their feelings of stress, implying that formal procedures aimed at dealing with stress would be unlikely to be created, when stress was not explicitly or formally acknowledged.

3.4.3.2. Lack of Formal Stress Procedures

In response to Q3 about what had been done so far to address staff stress, managers were straightforward in their replies.

"Have we really addressed this as a staff?" (line 664).

"We haven't really, have we?" (line 665).

"We put notices on the board about stress. We've told people there are stress lines to phone, but we've never really sat down and discussed stress as a staff." (lines 668-670).

Managers had apparently passed on to staff information about stress management services offered by the local education authority. The impression was that this had been done in a detached way, without acknowledging that staff in their school might have a need for such services. Managers were able to acknowledge that they had not taken responsibility for the provision of school based help with stress. This was a logically consistent response from teacher managers. When stress was not formally acknowledged it would be difficult to claim it had been formally addressed.

Research Sub-Question 3c: *Do teachers and teacher managers express differing views on what has been done so far to address work-related stress in teachers?* This appeared to be answered in the negative, that is, they seemed to agree that informal arrangements were in place to deal with stress.

3.4.4. Research Sub-Question 3d

Teachers' views on what should be done in future about stress seemed to be based mainly on the school's purchasing additional resources to alleviate some of their stressors (see Table 3.9.).

Table 3.9. Focus Group Q4:
comparison of views

What is the best way to deal with teacher's work-related stress in future?		
Codes	Teacher Managers	Teachers
	% of total Q4 coded segments	% of total Q4 coded segments
Culture		
Think outside the box	44.0	0
Target specific stressors	28.0	0
Support		
More non-contact time	0	80.9
More resources/staff	24.0	19.1

3.4.4.1. Similar Views of Teachers and Teacher Managers

Teachers and their managers were agreed on suggestions for future stress reduction. Teachers' talk included the need for help with additional duties such as paperwork and filing as a means of reducing stress in future.

"....doctors and all this that and the other, they have, all the top people, have got a personal assistant or a secretary." (lines 1060-1062).

"If you had a classroom assistant, not a teaching assistant, but a classroom assistant to do the paperwork, you know, did the filing for you and things like that..." (lines 1097-1099).

Teacher managers arrived at a similar view, describing a need for an additional person to help with duties not central to the classroom teaching role.

"I mean, that's the only kind of practical solution I would come to is I would divest clerical things..." (lines 1118-1119).

"Laminating bits." (line 1130).

"Staff should not be doing things like that." (line 1131).

Confusion about role definition, in this case whether the role of teachers should extend to clerical work and the preparation of resources, has been identified as sources of stress (Palmer, Cooper & Thomas, 2001). An excess of clerical work or paperwork has been described as stressful for teachers (GTC, 2002).

3.4.4.2. Differing Views between Teachers and Teacher Managers

The cumulative, stressful effect of failing to do marking and then having to explain that to parents was apparent for teachers. The solution for the future seemed to be an increase in non-contact time.

"You'll never stop it [stress] will you, unless....." (line 819)

"Unless you have non-contact time." (line 820).

"Well the marking gets left and, at the end of the day that really should be our priority." (lines 1005-1007).

"But if you leave your marking and then you've got parents coming in...." (lines 1131-1132).

Managers did not refer to non-contact time, opting for a broader view. Teacher managers sought to look beyond everyday details such as a need for more non-contact time and, in future, to deal with stress by thinking creatively.

"Change the delivery of the curriculum." (line 1013).

"....it releases them to actually have time, all the same time, so you can do the quality thinking." (lines 1016-1018).

"....'cos it's thinking outside of the box." (lines 1091-1020).

Managers talked in terms of dealing with teacher stress in future by creating the conditions for improving the creativity of their thinking ("thinking outside the box") rather than encouraging teachers to continue operating in the same way, but providing more time for them to do so.

Research Sub-Question 3d: *Do teachers and teacher managers express differing views on the ways in which work-related teacher stress might be addressed in future?* There were differences in views to the extent that teachers took a practical view of changes that might be made, whilst managers took a more strategic view. Research Sub-Question 3d appeared to be answered in the affirmative.

3.5. Discussion

3.5.1. Research Sub-Question 3a

3.5.1.1. Field of Constancy

Teachers and their managers referred to children's behaviour and attitudes, non-supportive parents and targets (curriculum) when asked about causes of

stress in teachers, but differing views were apparent in that teachers and their managers had different perspectives on these stressors. Argyris' (1990) use of the concept, field of constancy, may help explain this.

The everyday work of a teacher would seem to involve spending almost continuous time with children, which might not be the case for teacher managers. Time spent with other people is an example of a governing variable. Anxiety and energy expended are also governing variables. Time spent with, anxiety about, and energy expended on children could be high priority, governing variables for teachers (see section 1.13.6.).

Therefore, for teachers rather than their managers, children's difficult behaviour and attitudes could lead to problems in keeping their governing variables constant, that is maintaining their field of constancy. This would be a threat to the teachers' need to control and a lack of control has been linked to stress (Jimmieson, 2000; Palmer, Cooper & Thomas, 2001; Tattersall & Farmer, 1995; Troup & Dewe, 2002).

Regarding curriculum targets, when teacher managers were talking about targets as a cause of stress, they may have appeared to talk about teacher stress, when they were actually talking about causes of their own stress.

"....and potentially then on end of year results which impact on people's view of you." (lines 326-327).

For teacher managers, targets may be in their field of constancy. For teacher managers, rather than teachers, there may be anxiety about, and energy expended on, the general public's perception of the school's performance against targets.

There may be a threat of embarrassment to teacher managers if targets are not met, and of raised anxiety levels should public disapproval follow. The

prospect of anxiety levels moving beyond the familiar, beyond the field of constancy (Argyris, 1990) may be experienced by teacher managers, as not being in control, leading to increased stress.

The notion of keeping governing variables constant, maintaining a field of constancy, applies only to Model I learning. When teachers and their managers apply Model II learning it may be more difficult to explain why each has a different perspective on a given work-related issue as a cause of stress.

In Model II learning, control is shared by all involved. Governing variables are of a different nature to those found in Model I and include maximising valid information, allowing free and informed choice. There is no sense in which governing variables need be held constant and the notion of field of constancy does not seem to apply. Differing perspectives of teachers and their managers on a given work-related issue as a cause of stress, may not be explicable by resorting to the notion of their inhabiting different fields of constancy (Argyris & Schon, 1974).

Unlike Model I, Model II is not "self-sealing" (Argyris & Schon, 1974, p.92). Assumptions are tested publicly and change is promoted. Teachers and their managers learning together is facilitated and underlying problems are addressed. There appears to be an assumption, under Model II, that optimum conditions for manager-staff communication and learning are established. The implication seems to be that teachers and their managers are likely to agree on causes of work-related stress, with a resultant incapacity of the theory, in its Model II phase, to explain any differing views.

3.5.1.2. Defensive Actions

Teachers' stress might have been placed on the agenda for formal discussion at staff meetings, but meetings were reported by teachers as a cause of their stress, not as a means of addressing it. Managers' not referring to staff meetings as a source of teacher stress may have been a form of defensive action (see section 2.4.1) (Blackman, 2004).

Managers espoused that a caring ethos was provided for teachers.

"I think it's a very supportive school and I think people are very aware of when other people are feeling stressed or aren't quite themselves." (lines 214-216).

Managers appeared to have taken the view that teacher stress needs to be further addressed, but at an informal level.

"People need to meet more and talk more." (line 123).

Teachers appeared to value informal discussion of stress.

".....it's quite nice just to have an opportunity to speak to adults suddenly, isn't it, really, as well?" (lines 223-225).

Meetings appeared to have been used by teachers as an impromptu opportunity to de-stress through the diversion of jovial, informal conversation at the start of a formal meeting.

"It's perhaps more light hearted than it should be to start off with, I mean there are serious issues discussed, but the first part of it tends to be almost a [inaudible] – it's like the stress comes out." (lines 149-152).

Teachers appeared to use formal meetings to discuss stress, but did so in an informal way.

It would appear that teachers and their managers were agreed that the informal arena was the place where talk of stress should be located (Martin, 1998; Nytro et al, 2000).

As in the Pilot Study (see sections 2.3.5.3. and 2.4.3.) it may have appeared to managers that teacher stress was well understood within a caring ethos, that teachers accepted any discussion of stress should remain at an informal level, with no need to discuss this at formal meetings. Alternatively this may have been a defensive action on the part of managers; a way of covering up embarrassing issues or a means of by passing a sufficiently rigorous discussion on teacher stress (Argyris, 1990).

A question arises, as it did in the Pilot Study, about how staff stress can be addressed, when it is not openly and formally discussed (see sections 2.4.2 and 2.4.3). There may be a need, "…..to make the undiscussable discussable." (Argyris, 1990, p.xii).

3.5.1.3. Model II Learning: overcoming defensiveness

Within Model II learning, managers employ productive reasoning and reflect on any thoughts and feelings they may have in relation to defensiveness and a need to control others in the workplace. In Model II managers take the initiative by using constructive confrontation, tolerating embarrassment whilst encouraging others to do the same (Argyris, 1990). In contrast with The Pilot Study, there were indications in The Main Study that some of the teacher managers had the capacity for Model II learning.

Examination of the teacher managers' text indicated that one of the managers seemed to take the view that her informal or incidental conversation was a means of dealing with stress.

"But you see, we're de-stressing by talking about how you don't need to carry the can." (lines 1145-1146).

This belief was not accepted by the manager who spoke subsequently.

"But we're no nearer finding somebody to carry it for us." (lines 1147-1148).

The second speaker did not seem to share the espoused position that informal discussion was helping to lower stress levels.

On another occasion, one of the managers attempted to identify an area of school life which could be changed in order to reduce stress.

"We can't change the family and we can't change (inaudible) but we can make life bearable with what we've got by making changes ourself." (lines 1051-1053).

This assertion was not accepted by a manager who spoke subsequently.

"I wish I could believe that." (line 1055).

"Um." (line 1056)

"But I don't." (laughter). (line 1057).

In each case there was willingness, on the part of the second speaker, to tolerate embarrassment and use confrontation within the manager group. (Argyris, 1990). (The intentions of those making confrontational remarks above are open to interpretation. It is at matter of judgement as to how constructive, or otherwise, the above confrontations were intended to be).

When a manager does not adhere to the espoused position that teacher stress is addressed informally, there is a possibility she/he might use Model II learning to address causes not symptoms (Argyris,1990) with the prospect that stress will be formally targeted and successfully addressed. In The Main Study, teacher managers might take an initiative, possibly at a staff meeting, to invite teachers to talk about the issues in school which cause them stress and refrain from being over-protective and controlling in discussion. Managers might trust in staff's capacity to state their own needs, even when those statements might

reveal an embarrassing lack of knowledge, on the part of managers, about causes of stress in their teaching staff (Argyris, 1990).

The "Hawthorne" effect, with measures taken by managers and stress reportedly reduced (see section 3.3.7.1.) lent support to the suggestion that some teacher managers in The Main Study had the capacity to learn more about stress in teaching staff.

3.5.2. Research Sub-Question 3b

When comparing teacher managers' and teachers' views about work-related stress it seemed important to attempt an estimate of whether they were in agreement on what they meant by that term. It may have been argued that it was logical to start the focus group discussion with the question asking for views on a definition of work-related stress. The author took the view that participants who had agreed to take part in a dialogue on work-related stress, would feel more at ease initially, if they were invited to talk about their experiences of stress. The question about a definition of stress may have sounded too academic if it had been the starting point of the dialogue and fluent talk might have been inhibited. Focus group Q2, *What is your definition of work-related stress?* was therefore the second question posed.

3.5.3. Research Sub-Question 3c

Dialogue on what had, or had not been done so far about stress may have been inhibited by a difficulty in admitting to having experienced stress. Teachers were unwilling so make explicit statements about their own stress.

"Well, I think as well people's resistance to one thing, to, to, they don't want to signify they're not giving the full shilling." (lines 938-940).

Managers took a similar view.

"It's a question of capability. If you're admitting you're stressed, are you really saying that I'm not able and therefore capable of doing the work, so I won't admit that I'm stressed." (lines 681-684).

In commenting on what had been done so far to deal with work-related stress, managers and teachers were agreed that peer support was in place. Feelings could be displayed in a light hearted informal atmosphere of agreement and support, but no-one wanted to embarrass or upset anyone by saying this amounted to stress and that formal stress procedures were required (Argyris, 1990).

In managers' talk they acknowledged amongst themselves that there were no formal procedures in place to deal with stress (see section 3.4.3.2.). This acknowledgement of a possibly embarrassing issue shows a potential, within this group of managers, for reflection and setting aside assumptions. This, in turn, shows a capacity for Model II learning (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Argyris, 1990).

3.5.4. Research Sub-Question 3d

In order to address staff stress at a basic level and not just treat the symptoms, managers need to adopt a Model II approach which takes note of errors, then refers back to "governing values" such as, "....valid information, informed choice and responsibility to monitor how well the choice is implemented." (Argyris 1990, p.104).

Managers' references to releasing staff to have time for ***"quality thinking"*** (line 1018) espoused a Model II approach which advocates that managers should: "Attribute to other people a high capacity for self-reflection and self examination...." (Argyris 1990, p.106).

Managers' talk on how to deal with teachers' stress in future appeared to be an advance on acknowledgements that it was difficult to admit to stress and that it was being discussed only at an informal level.

3.6 Critique of the Main Study

The researcher gave teacher managers reminders that the focus group questions referred to staff stress, rather that manager stress (lines 42-45; 197-202; 261-263). Despite these prompts, when teacher managers were asked about teachers' stress, it was sometimes uncertain whether their responses referred or to staff as a separate group, or to themselves. Teacher managers, apart from the head, had regular teaching commitments. In that sense they were operating as staff rather than managers for a part of each day. It may be that, on some occasions, they were talking about stress which arose from their own teaching duties.

At the head's request, focus group data was gathered on all staff, not only teachers. The focus group questions were worded in terms of 'staff' which comprised four occupational groupings, teachers, teaching assistants, site manager and bursar. A clearer comparison of teachers' and teachers managers' views might have been obtained if the head had allowed The Main Study to be aimed at those occupational groups only.

With the benefit of hindsight, Research Questions 1 and 2 might have been unnecessary. The researcher's concerns about participants not providing sufficient quantity and quality of talk for analysis were not entirely without foundation (see section 3.3.2). Despite reservations about the potential embarrassment to participants of talking about work-related stress (see section 2.1) it seemed that most participants in both studies talked fluently and frankly about their stress concerns.

This thesis might have started with Research Question 3 and proceeded to a second research question examining manager-staff differences in more detail. Issues and themes derived from an initial study could have been used to design a questionnaire for gathering views in a second study following the model of Frederickson et al (2000). This would have enabled investigation, for example, of stress issues of apparent significance to staff, on which the managers' views were not known (see Table 3.6).

This type of investigation is time consuming which implies limitations for its use in future research. The results of focus group discussions are not necessarily generalisable (Vaughn, Schumm & Sinagub, 1996).

Data collection should be followed immediately by analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This was not the case with this thesis where several months elapsed between collection and analysis of data and several months again before feedback was provided to participants.

Codes listed as following a given question usually related to text segments following that question but this was not always the case. There is support in the literature for operating with such flexibility in coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

The data recording, transcription and analysis were time consuming. The transcription of group conversations for The Main Study, took 34 hours of

painstaking work from an experienced typist. Whilst it may be considered necessarily rigorous to allocate the substantial amount of time required by this type of investigation, future research may consider whether equally valid results can be obtained using a shorter time span.

It seems that the data recording, transcription and analysis in this thesis has not provided a model for EPs carrying out stress training in schools. It seems unlikely that they would be in a position to allocate this amount of time. This might imply that there might be a gain to EPs as trainers and to participants, in tilting the balance away from data gathering, towards intervention, using a problem based methodology approach (Robinson, 1993).

There are reservations about the generalisability of the findings. Whilst some of the findings in The Pilot Study were replicated in The Main Study (see Table 3.10) the samples of participants in both studies, whilst they were representative of the populations from which they were drawn, were not representative of the general population.

The sample sizes of both studies were close to the maximum practical size, given the scope of this thesis and large amount of transcript data produced for analysis. Nonetheless larger samples would need to be investigated before general conclusions could be drawn.

3.7. Summary

3.7.1. Main Findings

In both studies a total of 71,046 words of dialogue was read and analysed from 37 participants. It was not possible, within the scope of this thesis, to include

transcript data for all the school staff interviewed in the Main Study. Some data had to be set aside (see section 3.3.2.).

The Pilot Study showed that Research Questions 1 and 2 were answered in the affirmative. Participants were willing to sustain a substantial dialogue on the sensitive subject of work-related stress and their talk could be recorded, transcribed and analysed.

A logical sequence, see Figures 1.4 and 1.5, led to the formulation of Research Question 3, investigating the possibility that teachers and teacher managers in a primary school had differing views on work-related stress. The Main Study was designed to respond to Research Question 3, and it was shown that differing views of teachers and teacher managers, on the causes of work-related stress, were observable in their talk.

In the Pilot Study, Research Sub-Questions 1b and 2c were answered in the affirmative when analysis revealed differing views between manager and staff on work-related stress. The aims of the Pilot were exceeded, in that details of these manager-staff differences had emerged and were available for consideration. In summarising this thesis, it seemed useful to consider the Pilot Study and the Main Study together in order to consider any replication of the details of the differing manager-staff views emerging across the two studies. It is suggested that weight is lent to the findings in the Main Study by including replication of the details of the differing manager-staff views which had emerged in the Pilot Study (see Table 3.10.).

Table 3.10. Main findings: Pilot and Main Studies

Research Sub-Question referring to differing views on.....	Pilot Study (EPs) Staff & managers agree/disagree	Main Study (Teachers) Staff & managers agree/disagree
Causes of stress (3a)	Disagree Section 2.3.5.3.	Disagree Section 3.4.1.3.
Definition of stress (3b)	Not known	Agree Section 3.4.2.1.
What has been done so far on stress? (3c)	Agree Section 2.3.5.3.	Agree Section 3.4.3.1.
What to do in future on stress? (3d)	Not known	Disagree Section 3.4.4.2.

For EPs in The Pilot Study and teachers in The Main Study, it seemed that managers and staff agreed on some causes of stress but differed in their view on other causes. Whether a workplace issue is considered stressful may depend on how directly it impinges on the individual. In Studies 1 and 2, managers and staff were agreed that, to date, stress had been dealt with on an informal level.

The Main Study showed that managers and staff were agreed on a definition of work-related stress; they were agreed on what they meant by that term. The Main Study showed that managers tended towards a strategic view on what might be done in future to deal with stress, whereas staff favoured practical solutions applicable to the here and now.

3.7.2. Additional Components

In both studies manager(s) espoused a caring ethos, but in both studies staff's talk revealed that they hid their feelings of stress (see Table 3.11.). There may be difficulty in reconciling these two components.

Table 3.11. Additional components: Pilot and Main Studies

Component	The Pilot Study (EPs)	The Main Study (Teachers)
Manager(s) espouse a caring ethos	Yes Section 2.3.5.3.	Yes Section 3.5.1.2.
Staff hide feelings of stress	Yes Section 2.3.5.3.	Yes Section 3.4.3.1.
Managers hide feelings of stress	Not known	Yes Section 3.4.3.1.
Staff say informal discussion is helpful	Yes Section 2.3.5.3.	Yes Section 3.4.3.1.
Manager(s) say informal discussion is helpful	Yes Section 2.3.5.3.	Yes Section 3.4.3.1.
Lack of formal stress discussion/ procedures mentioned	No	Yes Section 3.4.3.2.
Manager(s) talk seems defensive	Yes Sections 2.4.1. & 2.4.3.	Yes Section 3.5.1.2.
Manager(s) show capacity for Model II learning	Not known	Yes Section 3.5.1.3.

In both studies staff and managers were agreed that informal discussion is helpful in allowing for discussion of stress. Discussion of stress appeared to be located in an informal domain in both studies. In The Main Study managers acknowledged that formal stress procedures were lacking, possibly implying that this was an omission needing attention from managers.

In both studies managers appeared defensive about work-related stress (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Argyris, 1990). In the Pilot Study, EPs' stress appeared to be understood in terms of factors intrinsic to the job, implying no need for further investigation. In the Main Study, some sources of teachers' stress, such as staff meetings were not referred to by managers.

In the Main Study, some teacher managers espoused a Model II or 'think outside the box' approach to stress and some were observed, during the dialogue, in practicing constructive confrontation (Argyris, 1990).

3.8. Conclusions

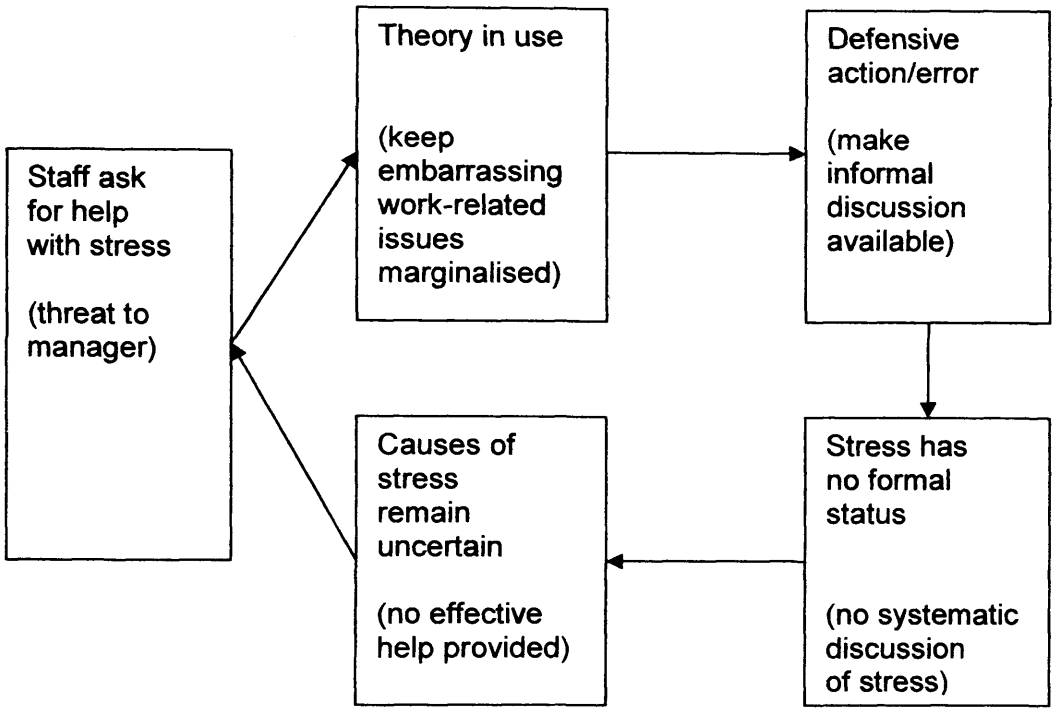
This thesis was concerned with attempting to explain why most published stress interventions have not resulted in a significant reduction of work-related stress. Two explanations were needed: firstly in relation to the error of misdirecting interventions at the individual level; secondly concerning the persistence or repetition of such errors in studies published over an extended period of time.

The literature appears to offer two alternatives for explaining the error of mis-direction. It is explained by a logical sequence, leading to a conclusion that managers misdirect interventions because they are unable to see the real causes of staff's stress (see Figures 1.4 and 1.5). There is an alternative explanation from a theory of organizational learning. Managers' not seeing the real causes of staff's stress may be explained by a defensive stance on the part of managers. It may be that managers 'won't see' rather than 'can't see' the real causes of staff stress (see Figures 1.4 and 4.1) (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Argyris, 1990).

In this thesis, examination of the talk of managers and staff indicated that mis-direction of interventions away from the organization towards the individual appeared to be explained by the organizational learning model. The persistence of mis-direction of interventions over an extended period requires an explanation of repetition of error over time. This explanation also seems to be provided by the organizational learning model (see Figure 4.2). The concept of managers' defensiveness seems to be important and an advance over the logical conclusion from the literature reviewed (see section 1.11) that managers are simply unable to see the real causes of staff stress.

In the Pilot and Main studies there was informal discussion of staff stress, but it seems unlikely that knowledge gained from informal discussion of staff stress will be integrated into the formal domain (see Figure 3.2.).

Figure 3.2. Informal stress discussion: Model I learning



Informal discussion may not lead to the systematic construction of formal procedures to deal with stress. Stress continues not to be addressed in a sufficiently rigorous and systematic manner.

In the Main Study managers demonstrated a degree of capacity to confront each other. When it was asserted by some managers that informal discussion on stress was sufficient, there appeared to be some capacity within the manager group to constructively confront this defensive position and advocate a different position. Provided confrontation is combined with, "....inquiry and self reflection..." (Argyris, 1990, p.107) it can lead into productive reasoning and an

escape from the Model I loop shown in Figure 3.2, into Model II learning (see section 3.5.1.3.).

There may be a prevailing assumption that stress management programmes can be implemented using a didactic approach, imparting information in a similar way to training school staff on new curriculum content or new computer software, but this seems unlikely to hold true. To bring about a reduction in work-related stress in schools, it may not be sufficient to transmit information to managers about stress and its reduction in their staff. Teacher managers seem unlikely to have their capacity for work-related stress reduction enhanced by an INSET session which imparts information. The type of stress intervention required seems to be one which is aimed at a change in managers' attitudes.

Stress management programmes may not have taken sufficient account of the nature of the change required and the time needed for its implementation. In seeking a model to guide this change, theories of organizational stress may have been of limited use (see section 1.12) and it has been necessary to turn to a theory of organizational learning (Argyris & Scon, 1974; Argyris, 1990).

Participants in The Main Study indicated that the analysed data accurately reflected their views and so cancellation by the acting head, of the scheduled meeting when intervention plans were to be drafted may merit consideration. The reason given for cancellation was pressure of work, implying a stressed school being too stressed to accommodate to the offer of help with stress. When data was fed back to teachers and their managers (see section 3.3.7.) this had shown that the outcome of this study mattered to the participants, not only the researcher (Salmon, 2003) in that it was of value to them as a means of informing a possible future stress management programme in their school.

When the researcher offered further support, any added value seemed insufficient in the face of competing demands.

Future research might explore ways of designing stress interventions in such a way as they emerge routinely from the everyday working arrangements in a school, rather than addressing stress as an extra component.

Work-related stress management data gathering may be superseded by the broader approach of employee satisfaction surveys (Flower, 2004). Specially constructed stress interventions could be replaced by supporting teacher managers in making adjustments to existing communication and support structures with the aim, for example, of improving manager-staff interaction in staff meetings. Work-related stress might be reduced by a sympathetic approach to attitude change and overcoming defensiveness throughout the school (Argyris, 1990).

CHAPTER 4

4.1. Implications for EPs and EP Managers

Argyris (1990) suggests an intervention strategy which is aimed at, ".....empowering the organization with the capacity to learn, especially around problems which are embarrassing or threatening." (Argyris, 1990, p.95). It is suggested that an issue selected for attention might be a long term problem which the organization has been trying to solve, but cannot.

Such a problem might be EPs' concern that their work is often unsatisfying because they are too occupied with statutory work and get little opportunity to use their psychology training in order to intervene and solve some of the problems which arise with children, parents and schools (see section 2.3.5.3). A sequence of events according to Argyris (1990) might be as follows.

Step 1. Managers feel embarrassed that they are presiding over an EP service which under-uses its EPs' skills. Managers need to defend against this.

Step 2. Managers "cover up" their embarrassment (Argyris 1990, p.98). The cover up takes the form of formulating a policy for the EP service. That policy espouses that the EP service is 'intervention based' that is to say, EPs are mainly concerned with intervention and not heavily involved with statutory work.

Step 3. This policy statement has "by passed" (Argyris, 1990, p.98) the problem. Managers have not prepared the way for this policy statement by arranging for the greater proportion of special educational needs resources to be allocated without

the need for statutory procedures, thereby relieving EPs of much of their statutory duties.

Step 4. EPs are stressed from being under an obligation to espouse that they are offering an intervention service, when, their theory-in-use leads them to practising statutory work (see section 2.3.5.4, lines 20-21).

Step 5. Managers perform a second cover up by not encouraging EPs to discuss work related stress (see section 2.3.5.3, lines 15-17). Therefore EPs are not "upset" (Argyris, 1990, p.98) by having to admit that they are not following service policy and EP managers will not find themselves in a "threatening" situation (Argyris, 1990, p. 95) in having to relate to staff who are not complying with policy.

[Steps 1-5 describe how a policy is declared, without making the necessary arrangements to implement that policy. This is manager "error" (Argyris, 1990, p.6) and it is consistent with Model I learning].

Step 6. Managers, "Repeat errors skillfully so they can continue to be repeated." (Argyris, 1990, p.23). That is to say managers, over a period of time, re-state their policy on offering an intervention service in a way which is skilful, plausible and convincing to new recruits to the EP service, who, in turn, help to re-state the espoused position.

Step 7. It is suggested that managers may be helped to "re-educate" themselves (Argyris, 1990, p.95) and address their own defensiveness by using specifically tailored seminars. It is contended that the necessary insight can be developed by using case studies which initially reveal to managers a difference between espoused theory and theory-in-use and then assist their transfer to Model II learning, which is then repeated to solve new problems as they arise.

This strategy may be similar to that used in the study by Beermann et al (1999) which appeared successful in reducing stress. Various types of small group discussion have been used in German companies in areas such as human resources, productivity and the devising of policies on working conditions. Beermann et al (1999) used "problem solving groups" (p.226) to identify stressors and suggest solutions. Such an approach would not, in itself, guarantee successful manager-staff communication, but in Germany, where the study took place, it seems there is an established pattern of this discussion approach being used. Experience of the technique may have helped to overcome any difficulties with manager defensiveness.

4.2. Implications for EPs as Stress Training Providers

When EPs provide schools with training on dealing with work related stress, the invitation is likely to come from the teacher managers, the head and senior management team in the school. It may be that the teacher managers have suggested that their reasons for inviting stress management input, are similar to those which staff would put forward. The EP, as trainer, needs to refrain from assuming that is the case.

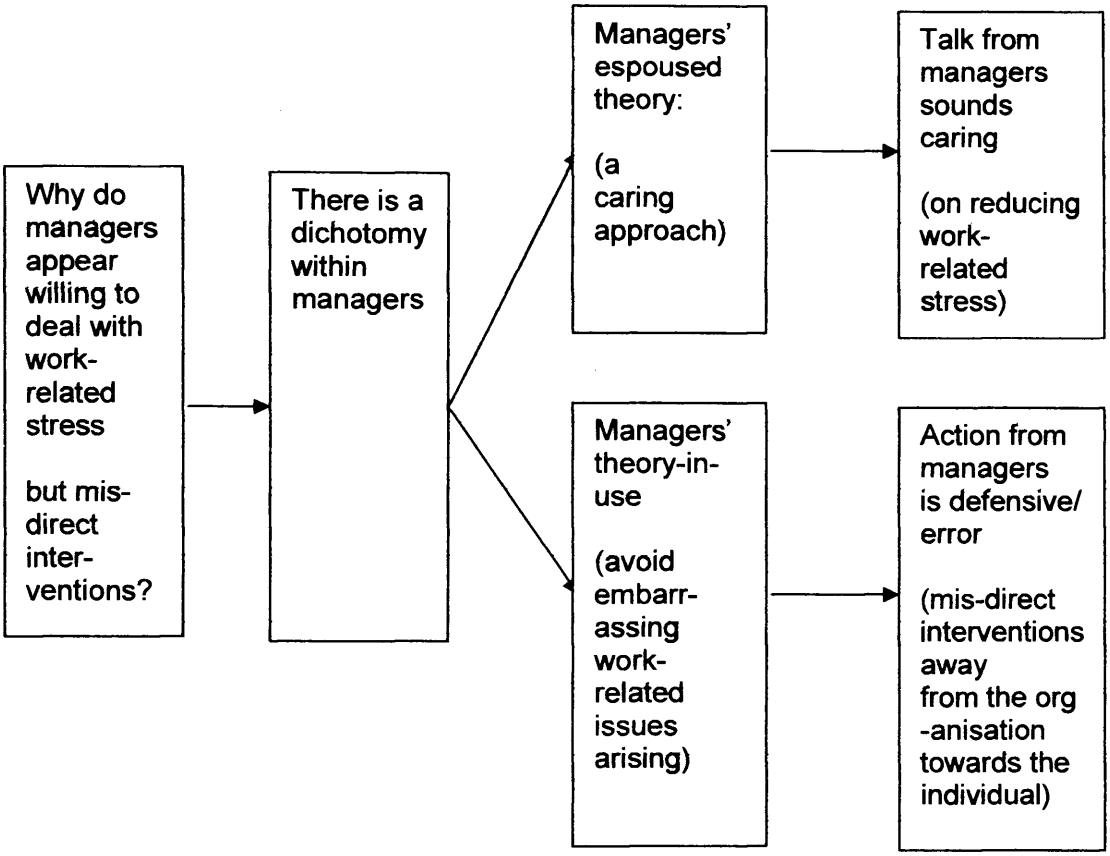
The Main Study has shown that managers and staff may have a shared view on a definition of stress, but differ in their perceptions of the causes of stress and how it should be addressed in future. The aim of a training session might be to make stress interventions more effective in a given school. A simple form of recording and coding or summarising the views of staff in a school could be devised. For example, the EP might divide the staff of a primary school into groups consisting of

teachers and, separately, teacher managers, inviting them, in a structured sequence, to discuss the focus group questions. The views of each group might be summarised by a volunteer member. The EP as facilitator would then distil these summaries. A group view could be gathered for managers and then separately for staff allowing a manager-staff comparison of views, to be structured by the facilitator. This needs to be done carefully in order to note any discrepancies and not accentuate divisions.

When the EP as facilitator structures a comparison of managers' views with those of staff, there is an the assumption that illustrating a mismatch of perceptions will encourage managers to take action which will bring their views on the causes of stress, closer to staff's views. Such a training sequence aims to make stress interventions more effective in that school by providing managers with information about discrepancies between their views and the views of staff. The sequence follows a simple logic as shown in Figures 1.4 and 1.5.

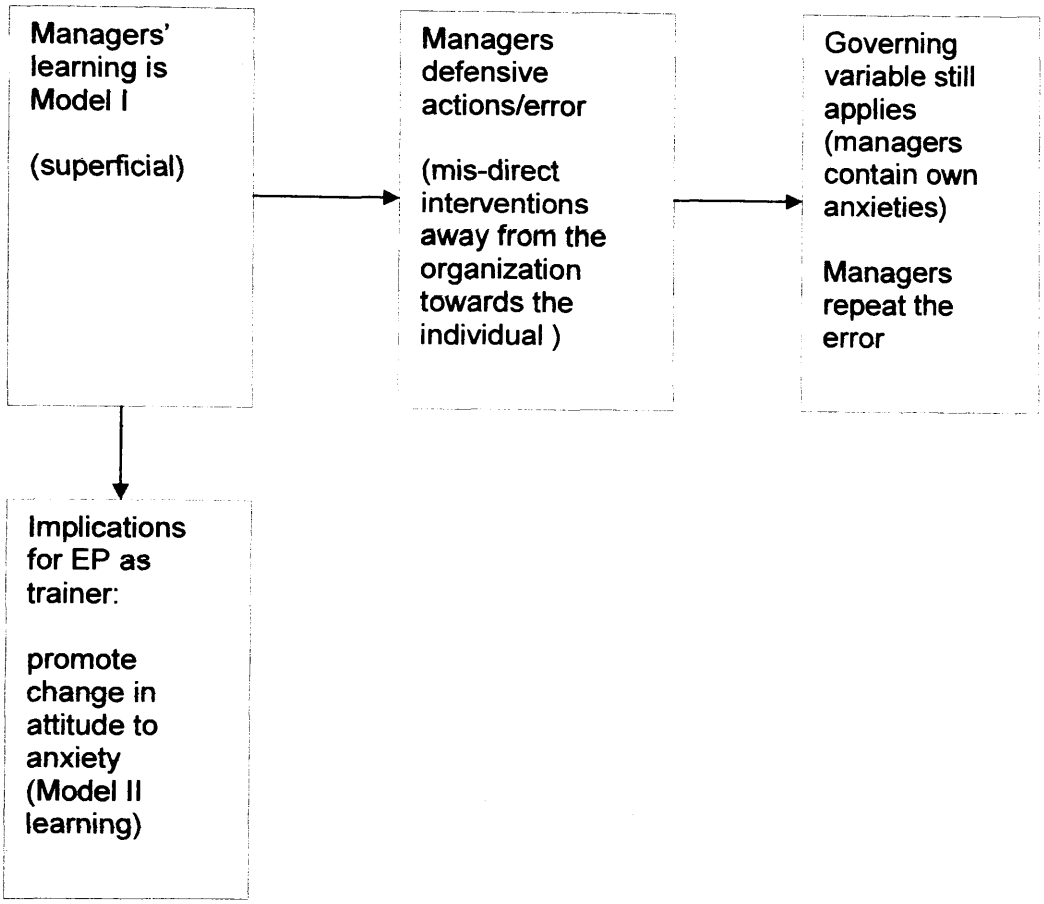
Alternatively, following the Argyris (1990) model, the EP needs to consider the dichotomy within the managers' mental set, in which they hold both espoused and in-use theories (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1. The managers' dichotomy



The EP as trainer needs to consider how to promote attitude change and invite managers to move from Model I to Model II learning (see Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2. Avoiding repetition of errors



The aim is the same; to make stress programmes more effective in that school, but the process is different. It may not be a question of the EP as trainer, inviting managers to bring their views closer to those of staff. There may instead be a need to addressing defensive behaviour and Model I learning. In mis-direction of stress programmes, there could be a governing variable which may involve managers needing to contain their own anxieties and, without attitude change, this continues to apply (see Figure 4.2). When the governing variable continues to apply, the resultant error or mis-direction is persistent. For the EP as stress trainer, the

implications may not be as shown in Figure 1.5, they may be as shown in Figure 4.2.

Following the Argyris model (Figure 4.2) the EP as facilitator might structure a comparison between Model I and Model 2 learning and invite managers to progress to Model II. This strategy attempts to make stress interventions more effective by inviting attitude change on the part of managers. Both alternatives (Figures 1.5 and 4.2) have implications for the EP as facilitator, but the facilitator role is different in each case.

The attitude change implied by a change to Model II learning may require a lengthy procedure. The pace of change in schools is likely to be gradual: "School innovation becomes accepted and institutionalized at a very slow pace where not only the practices but also the attitudes of participants need to change." (Webb & Vulliamy, 2004, p.x). The EP's stress training may benefit from taking place in a more extended form to take account of this.

When an EP is invited by a school to provide stress management training, the EP might emphasise the importance of discussing with the teachers and teacher managers how the training might be designed and implemented. The EP might begin by offering a short introductory session as a means of introducing the EP as trainer and allowing a sense of trust (Beer, Eisenstat & Spector, 1988) to begin to develop between trainer and school staff. The EP might then clarify that a second stage of training is needed, constructed in a way which is individualised to that school.

The writing of this thesis has convinced the author of a need to develop his own practice in delivering stress management training in schools. It seems that a brief,

half day, or one day stress management training is unlikely to produce lasting change.

Teacher managers in the Main Study showed capacity for moving to Model II learning (see section 3.5.1.3). There was willingness, on the part of some members of that group, to tolerate embarrassment and use constructive confrontation with other group members (lines 1147-1148). The challenge for the EP is to harness this willingness for attitude change.

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APPENDIX 1
PILOT STUDY

Literature Searches

PsycINFO

Key words: stress
1887-1970 to 1998-1999/09
50525 records found

Key words: stress management
1887-1970 to 1998-1999/09
1946 records found

Key words: occupational stress and (English in la.)
1887-1970 to 1998-1999/09
4168 records found

Key words: occupational stress management and (English in la.)
1887-1970 to 1998-1999/09
17 records found

Key words: managing change and (English in la.)
1887-1970 to 1998-1999/09
77 records found

Key words: psychology of change and (English in la.)
1887-1970 to 1998-1999/09
116 records found

Key words: Galloway David
1887-90 to 1998-2000/03
27 records found

ERIC

Key word: stress
1996-1999
577 records found

Institute of Education Library, 10-05-03.

Key words: teacher stress – search everything.
20 records found. These were mainly surveys of teacher stress and methods of stress reduction for teachers.

Birkbeck College Library, 10-05-03.

Key words: workplace stress – subject keyword enquiry.
No relevant records found. Records were related to sociology including studies of the working class; the work of...etc.
Key words: workplace stress – subjects A to Z.
No relevant records found.
Key words: occupational stress – subjects A to Z.
1 record found.

Manual Searches

The journal, Work and Stress
2000 to 2002.
8 relevant records found.

Script for Briefing of Participants

Purpose of this Research

Work-related stress persists. Despite support from managers there still seems to be a gap in understanding between managers and staff on stress in the workplace. Managers and staff seem to have differing ideas on stress; they are not 'singing from the same hymn sheet'.

I have a short list of stress-related questions. I plan to ask managers and staff about work-related stress and any differing manager-staff points of view will be illustrated by their differing answers.

This research is aimed at describing, if present, any differences in view between managers and staff on work-related stress. After this project is over there is potential benefit to you as participants if you wish to take things forward. After the analysed discussions have been fed back all participants, managers will be in a position to consider whether they have understood staff stress accurately. Managers will have information on the real causes of stress in their staff. They can use this information to help design a stress reduction programme for staff.

Transcript Analysis, EP Manager's Text Sample
Manager, 1:1 Interview, 16/7/01: text and codes

nos	*TRANSCRIPT*	CODES
1	**Manager:** *Well the stress culture is all to do with timescales and deadlines and getting things right, isn't it.*	Time constraints/
2	*That's what causes the stress. And conflicting, competing demands.*	Prfnl standards/
3	**Researcher:** We talked about 'do you as a manager believe that staff stress is mainly personal' – *people*	Conflicting demands
4	*should not complain about stress....* those sorts of issues.	
5	**Manager:** Did we? I think it comes with the job. *I think if you can't cope with stress you shouldn't be in*	EPs not OK to talk
6	*this job really. Because it is there, isn't it.* Because peoples emotions are engaged out there, parents and	about stress
7	teachers and whatever. It's not all, how they feel about a problem isn't rational. As I say they have got	
8	their emotions engaged and that will cause more stress, won't it.	
9	**Researcher:** But does the work culture dictate people should not admit to being stressed?	
10	**Manager:** *Oh no I think we all admit to being stressed all the time.*	EPs OK to talk
11	**Researcher:** Right. In some literature it says that stress is a badge of honour, if you are not stressed	about stress
12	there's something wrong with you.	
13	**Manager:** I think if you are not careful you can get into that. If you are actually coping you have probably	
14	not understood the nature of the job, that sort of feeling that goes around, which I don't think we have got	
15	here but I can see how that can happen. *There are certain team members who are always complaining*	EPs not OK to talk
16	*about being stressed as if they should be, because that means they are working hard which I don't*	about stress
17	*necessarily agree with but I try to play that down with them always.*	
18	**Researcher:** Right. Ok, just think is there anything more in these prompt questions. Is staff stress mainly	
19	personal? No because you have said that there are stressors at work. Do you believe staff's complaints	
20	are mainly whinging.	
22	**Manager:** *No I think they are genuine.*	
23	**Researcher:** Is stress beneficial. Is a stressed worker a good worker. Someone who is working 12 hours	EPs OK to talk
24	a day, 14 hours a day – is that the sort of person you would like to have?	about stress
25	**Manager:** *I want somebody who is going to do it well* and if that means it's going to take them 14 hours a	
26	day to do it well, because that's their style, then that's fine. *I don't want them to have to work 14 hours a*	Prfnl standards
27	*day because otherwise they couldn't do the job, do you know what I mean? I'm not making any sense am I*	
28	*really? I don't want them to feel they have got to work 14 hours a day; if they can get the job done, as I*	
29	*say, on a good enough basis in the working day, good luck to them, you know, that's how it ought to be*	Expectations of
30	*really. I think it's dangerous to get into this, you know, if I'm going to do it properly I've got to do more and*	staff's hours
31	*more and more. I don't think that's healthy. I always try to go home on a Friday first and tell them to leave*	
32	*and things like that. You know, you don't want to feel as if you've got to work all those hours or you're not*	
33	*doing it properly.*	
34	**Researcher:** What are your staff's overall stress coping strategies would you say? Time management for	
35	example is . . .	
36	**Manager:** Time management, yes. *I think we're very good at supporting each other here. People will*	EPs OK to talk
37	*come in and say, oh, I've had a terrible morning or whatever, and somebody will always stop and listen. I*	about stress
38	*mean there's a lot of chatting in corridors goes on and whatever. And people do talk through things a lot*	
39	*with other people and I'm sure that's positive, I'm sure that's helpful. Time management, yes. Erm, I hope,*	
40	*I mean I try to be very available for people to come and talk about things and to ask questions or to share*	
41	*things and I hope that helps.*	
42	**Researcher:** Right.	
43	**Manager:** *As I say, I'm available, I'm here, you know. I've always got time to hear what they're concerned*	EPs OK to talk
44	*about. I don't think any of them have got particular hobbies or whatever that I could identify as being stress*	about stress
45	*relieving.* I mean Name's got her music which is positive for her, and I think Name's more relaxed as he	
46	has his dog. Well he deliberately though if he had a dog he'd have to go home earlier.	EPs' hobbies/
47	***Researcher:*** *Oh?*	personal stress
48	***Manager:*** *Because he'd have to go home for the dog. And he takes it out for a walk in the morning and*	mngmt
49	*I'm sure that helps him. I think Sean plays music doesn't he? He plays the guitar and whatever. But*	
50	*people are always saying well, I'm going to start going to the gym, but I don't notice them ever doing it. Or*	
51	*go swimming. I don't think it really happens.*	
52	**Researcher:** You've answered part of the next one. What have you done as line manager to reduce	
53	stress levels in your staff, so that there's informal contacts, informal support, informal . . .	
54	**Manager:** *As regularly as possible. I mean when I come into the office, as I go down the corridor to make*	EPs OK to talk
55	*coffee or whatever, I stop and say hello, how are you, had a nice weekend, and you know, how are things*	about stress
56	*going sort of thing, on the way down, so that I make contact with them. I don't wait for them to come to me.*	
57	**Researcher:** Mmm.	
58	**Manager:** *So I deliberately do that. And I just try to make sure as much as I can that there's a friendly and*	EPs OK to talk
59	*relaxed atmosphere in the place. This ought to be the place you can come back to when you're feeling*	about stress
60	*stressed and get some release from that. I remember when I hadn't been here very long, we hadn't a*	
	senior here and [name]I had only just joined the team and I think this was the summer and we'd	

Transcript Analysis, Staff's (EPs') Text Sample
Staff Focus Group, 26-06-01: text and codes

nos	TRANSCRIPT	CODES
1	**Staff.** I'm a practical, I have to make sure I have something to eat at lunch time, otherwise I get very edgy	
2	. . . I have to make sure I have time in between visits to do that.	
3	**Staff.** It is the time.	
4	**Staff.** Well it might just be a sandwich in the car but I have to make sure I eat something.	
5	**Staff.** *I find there's too much weight on statutory work*, things that have been imposed to attend or . . . from	Statutory duties
6	the LEA, *doesn't have the same satisfaction to build a relationship* with the school or the pupils that you	Cantgivqualityserv
7	could if you were doing other work.	
8	**Staff.** OK.	
9	**Staff.** *I don't find enough time to follow things through, because we've got in some schools where you've*	Time constraints
10	*only got three or four visits a year and you set something up in September and then you don't get round to*	
11	*monitoring it and following it through in the way you'd like to because on the next visit they've prioritised*	
12	*another child for you to see and mum's coming in* and you never get, I	
13	don't feel that I ever get enough time to go through things in a lot of detail or to liaise with the assistant EPs	
14	and that sort of thing *to follow things through to make sure we actually are producing, you know, giving a*	Cantgivqualityserv
15	*good service.*	
16	**Staff.** *Hit and run approach isn't it.*	Cantgivquality serv
17	**Staff.** Yeah, *we don't have enough time to follow anything through.*	Time constraints
18	[Everybody talking at once here.]	
19	**Staff.** *Time to follow things through.*	Time constraints
20	**Staff.** *We sell ourselves as an intervention based service don't we, and yet I don't feel that I'm doing*	Cantgivquality serv
21	*enough of that or having the opportunities to do that. Because we get bogged down in statutory . . .*	
22	**Staff.** *It's stressful not being able to work in that sort of way when that's how you feel you would work best.*	Cantgivquality serv
23	**Staff.** But it's also, Name, that it's working with schools . . .	
24	**Staff.** What did she say?	
25	**Researcher.** She mentioned your name. Don't worry, it's still completely confidential.	
26	[General chatter]	
27	**Staff.** You just said . . .	Confidentialresearch
28	**Staff.** You won't put the names in will you?	Confidentialresearch
29	**Researcher.** No. You can use names, yeah.	
30	**Staff.** *I think, as you say, it's getting to know the schools and building up that relationship with the staff. To*	Time constraints
31	*turn round. It's not easy, but to turn round and say to them – I'm not going to have all these umpteen kids*	
32	*passed on to me. You know, that if I do see a child . . . I might see another child but I expect . . . thirty*	
33	*minutes to talk about the child I'd previously talked about* [loud telephone ringing near microphone makes	
34	this very difficult to transcribe] . . . I mean that's a very difficult thing but you know what I'm saying, it's like	
35	playing it back to them and saying you know, if *I see somebody then the expectation is that I'll be able to*	Misma expectations
36	*follow it up next time I'm in. You know, I'm not a conveyance system for you.*	
37	**Staff.** *But again I find that difficult if you've got a school that's only got three visits. In a school where*	Can't give quality
38	*you're in more regularly you can build up that relationship with the staff and know that . . .*	service
39	**Staff.** . . . some of them are only village schools, *so they're only seen three times a year.* And some	Time constraints
40	SENCos are full time class teachers as well. But then it's been that battle with the head and the governors	
41	saying well, you know *it's up to the EP to do these sorts of assessments* and you've got to have them off	
42	for a morning a week, or a whole day a week. *It's been a bit of a battle, but I've won that. I'm not trying to*	
43	*say there's any easy answer because I don't think there actually is but it's, you know . . .*	
44	**Staff.** *I'm sure that isn't what should have been said but it's . . .*	
45	**Staff.** *It's an unrealistic expectation of . .*	Misma expectations
46	**Staff.** *It is.*	Misma expectations
47	**Staff.** *Of which you're constantly left letting them down because you're not doing what . . .*	Misma expectations
48	**Staff.** *Exactly.*	Misma expectations
49	**Staff.** *You're taking the role that they think you can.*	Misma expectations
50	**Staff.** *And actually what happens if the specialist teachers can do that ongoing intervention. They have a*	Cantgivquality serv
51	*much closer relationship which then cuts us out, back to the statutory work.*	
52	**Staff.** *Yes, that's true.*	Cantgivquality serv
53	**Staff.** *And particularly pre-schoolers as well that happens.*	Cantgivquality serv
54	**Staff.** *I think what you say about unrealistic expectations is quite significant actually because, and what*	Misma expectations
55	*feeds into that partly is because we have, they have an unrealistic expectation of us.* But sometimes the	
56	message we're giving back to schools is you must do more. *You* must do more. *You* must take	
57	responsibility for – and it becomes for the "problem child" and then it becomes a bit of *a battle.* No, *you've*	
58	got to do more. We want *you* to do more. I find those conversations can be a bit difficult and cyclical and	
59	uncomfortable when there's a bit of to-ing and fro-ing going on, so yeah, realistic expectations. But on both	
60	sides. Sometimes I think we expect too much of schools	

APPENDIX 2
MAIN STUDY

Briefing Sheet for Participants

Briefing Information for Research Participants: to be read to them and discussed as appropriate Just before the start of the focus group/individual interview.

Work-related stress: the purpose of this research

- This research is about work-related stress; stress in the workplace, not personal stress. The distinction between the two is that personal stress is the stress that the individual takes personal responsibility for. Stress related to domestic matters is personal stress. If you don't organise work things like your own lesson preparation, the items you need to bring to school for the start of the day, your timetable or schedule for the day, these can lead to stress and that is personal stress too.
- Work-related stress is the stress that managers take responsibility for. If there are busy times of the year, when tests need to be administered, sports events or outings arranged, which are potentially stress inducing then managers take responsibility for supporting staff to organise their work and pace things out.
- This research is also about differing ideas and views that managers and staff have about stress. A study carried out earlier showed that staff feel that managers are often supportive and, on an informal level, they do what they can to contain and reduce stress. But stress still persists despite this support. There still seems to be a gap in understanding between managers and staff on stress in the workplace; managers and staff seem to have differing views on stress.
- I therefore have a short list of stress-related questions. I plan to ask managers and staff the same questions and so any differing points of view will be illustrated by different answers. Managers can then see clearly any differing ideas between managers and staff. Managers are then in a position to act to address the differences, close any communication gaps, move towards a shared manager-staff view, and act to reduce workplace stress.

Confidentiality

- We are about to start a group discussion on work-related stress. I cannot write quickly enough to write down everything you say and so I am asking if you agree to my using a tape recorder. What you say on tape will be typed up by an agency typist in Surbiton; she is not likely to know you or be able to recognise your voice.
- Your comments made as part of this study will be treated in the strictest confidence. Individual views and opinions are welcome but they cannot be identified as coming from you.
- There are no right or wrong answers and contradictory views are wholly acceptable (Frederickson et al, 2000, p.409).

Work-related stress: some key issues

- Stress is difficult to define clearly and concisely (Lazarus,1966 b) and it may be best considered as a general term which can mean different things to different people (Briner,1993, p.4).
- Surprisingly few work-related stress programmes have succeeded in reducing stress (Nytro et al, 2000,14, no.3 p.213).

Managers often have a positive attitude towards dealing with work-related stress....

- The Mental Health Foundation (2001) reported on a series of interviews with managers on the subJect of stress in the workplace (p.5).
- They found that every organisation interviewed had actual experience of workplace stress and wanted to tackle it positively (p.3).
- The Mental Health Foundation (2001) report gives examples of facilities such as counselling/gym schemes, and discussion opportunities, which organisations provide in order to deal with stress (pp.14-15).
- Your LEA has a policy on workplace stress (April '98).

but .....

- Stress is seen as an over-used word (p.16).
- Some managers do not believe that the cost of stress is as high as it is claimed to be (p.9).
- Managers may feel responsible for dealing with workplace stress but they do not want personal stress mixed in with this (p.6).
- There is a view that senior employees in an organisation experience less stress than others (p.13).
- Managers are not clear how to deal with stress (p.7).

- AT END. After this discussion is over I will summarise what everybody has said. In order to fulfill the purpose of this research, which I mentioned a few minutes ago, I will need to show the managers' summary to staff and the staff's summary to the managers. I will only do this if you agree that I may do so. I will ask for your agreement after I have returned to school in a few weeks to feedback your data to you.

Researcher's Aide Memoir

Take the following materials

Blank A4 pad
Tape recorder
Extension lead
Microphone
New batteries
Spare cassette tapes
Briefing sheet

Things to do

Place batteries in microphone
Check microphone is switched on
Connect microphone to tape recorder
Plug in and test recorder and microphone
Explain confidentiality arrangements: briefing sheet read out to participants and discussed as required, Just before interview starts. This contains basic workplace stress information, defines workplace stress to distinguish it from personal and highlights the main issues and explains confidentiality arrangements.
Each participant to note their length of service. It may be that less experienced participants are less talkative.

Trusting the Data
Feedback to Participants

Aide Memoir for Feedback Session

1. Remind participants that the data they are about to be shown may inform a stress management programme for the school. Their views are requested on the accuracy with which the data represented their views and whether the data might usefully inform such a programme.
1. Show them the codes and text segments to the supplementary question about the positive asoects of working here – get off to a positive start.
2. Show them the Q1 list of codes and text segments – Is this the essence of what you said about what stresses you?
3. Show the codes and text segments for Q4, stress solutions. Is this the essence of what you said?
4. Ask them to complete rating scale, below, for code accuracy and usefulness.

Participants' Rating Scale for Code Authentication

Q1. *Are the codes you were shown an accurate summary of your views?*

5	4	3	2	1
Very accurate		Not sure either way		Not at all accurate

Q2. *Do you think that the codes you were shown may be useful in devising a programme to reduce your work-related stress?*

5	4	3	2	1
Very useful		Not sure either way		Not at all useful

Table Ap 2.1. Responses on accuracy of data analysis

Q1. Are the codes you were shown an accurate summary of your views?					
Group	Number of participants scoring				
	5	4	3	2	1
SMT	2	1	1		
Teachers 1		3	1		
Teachers 2	2				
TAs 1	2	2			
TAs 2	3				
Support Stf	2				

Participants scoring 4/5: 89.5%

Table Ap 2.2. Responses on usefulness of data analysis

Q2. Do you think that the codes you were shown may be useful in devising a programme to reduce work-related stress?					
Group	Number of participants scoring				
	5	4	3	2	1
SMT	1	2	1		
Teachers 1	1	2	1		
Teachers 2	1	1			
TAs 1	4				
TAs 2	3				
Support Stf	1		1		

Participants scoring 4/5: 84.2%

The original total of 25 participants was reduced to 19 for the feedback sessions because of staff illness or moving to other posts.

Percentage of Text Coded
(see Section 3.2.3, Setting Aside Some Data)

Managers	
Number of lines coded	1044
Number of lines in text	1340
% of text coded	78%
Teachers Group 1	
Number of lines coded	773
Number of lines in text	1199
% of text coded	64%
Teachers Group 2	
Number of lines coded	291
Number of lines in text	827
% of text coded	35%
TAs Group 1	
Number of lines coded	937
Number of lines in text	1523
% of text coded	62%
TAs Group 2	
Number of lines coded	582
Number of lines in text	1359
% of text coded	43%
Support Staff	
Number of lines coded	498
Number of lines in text	1268
% of text coded	39%

Reflective Notebook
Seaside Primary School

Teacher Managers, 13-11-02

The head mentioned at a preliminary meeting, 04-02-02, and during other contacts before the data gathering started that communication is an issue at the school ever since it was identified by OFSTED (Oct. 1999).

The current deputy was acting head for a year before the current head took up her post – the researcher's impression was that there was an unspoken issue around the acting head not being appointed to the permanent post.

When it came to the point of asking for positives at the end of the focus group, they were slow to come and the initial response was an embarrassing silence. One teacher said that the positives were the children (i.e. not the staff or the leadership from the head)

Spontaneously, before I asked for it, they started talking about their own stressors. Communication within the manager group seemed to be a problem. There was some criticism of Z from D and J about head's communication with managers.

J indicated that there was no point in talking about being overburdened with admin as she knew from head that there was no money to help with this.

J indicated that if you start talking about a problem that develops an illusion that the problem is going to be dealt with. If it's not going to be dealt with because there's no money that creates a false expectation.

This part of the meeting was a bit emotional with the two of them against H.

(Z expressed concerned to me after the meeting that J feels there's no point in discussing things. This made Z feel pessimistic about her willingness to promote change generally).

S was positive about creating change but she is new in post and brought in by H from having worked with her at a previous school.

Z was quite emotional afterwards – she seems to need help with management. H feels she does communicate, others feel she doesn't.

The only male teacher in the group said virtually nothing and seemed embarrassed when I invited him to speak.

Re school's need for an intervention plan - I've got to come up with some communication issues which will help the opposing camps.

Z's spontaneous discussion on my arrival in school for above meeting. She talked of her own stress leading to health problems – having to cut down on out of school committee work, working parties etc.

Generally very concerned about stress induced workload and ways of resolving the dilemma of senior staff being involved in a wide range of non-teaching and management activities.

Z spontaneous discussion just after I had arrived in plenty of time for the second group of teachers, 20-01-03.

She regretted that one teacher would be missing from today's group, meaning I will have missed only one member of the teaching staff (I had previously missed only one member of the senior management team – the deputy who was the person who was in competition with the head for her Job).

Z was very keen to talk and seemed enthusiastic about this research project. Z reminded me that I had agreed to assist in the formulation of an action plan based on my data when it ultimately becomes available to the school, after preparation in a few months' time.

As a means of structuring a stress action plan Z has written this research project into the School Development Plan. At present it is written in under the simple heading of stress management. However Z wants to put it under a more specific heading such as 1. The OFSTED Report, section on Communication within the school. 2. Healthy Schools Programme, a DfES initiative in which Seaside is taking part. 3. Reduction of teacher absence (a DfES initiative) 4. Work-life Balance (a DfES initiative in which teachers' unions are also involved).

Z's thoughts are that many staff may feel that communication is satisfactory and attention to it may be seen as undue and negative. Absenteeism may make some staff defensive if it is focussed upon. Work-life balance may be the most appropriate vehicle to progress a stress action plan.

Z is pleased that this research allows staff to talk – it is not Just a matter of collecting test scores, which the head feels are "static." The head feels that the conversational element is "dynamic," Stress is an "emotional" issue which cannot be expressed as test scores.

A research exercise which produced test scores alone would not readily lead to an action plan.

Z also emphasised the benefits of having the researcher as an external consultant. At the end of this data gathering Z wants me to help her draw up stress management action plan (although that will be beyond the scope of this thesis). Z felt this external factor to be a valuable component. Z felt that an external

consultant is in a better position to trigger an action plan; an external consultant can make "an honest appraisal" of how well the school is doing.

A good consultation, Z said is about "active listening" which she feels she cannot do because she is too involved. Z said that you have to give people "quality time – listen to how they are feeling – that's what we don't get."

Z referred back today to the senior managers' focus group when she admitted to her own stress. Z said that in order to admit to stress I had to feel secure amongst my staff – otherwise an impression of weakness would have been created.

Z referred back today to a comment made to her by the researcher before the data gathering had started. This comment was to the effect that schools are like families – your work in a school is something you live and breath – Just like family life. Z added that by the same token, "That's what makes it stressful - you can't switch off." Z also indicated that there is extra stress from the job being "people orientated."

Teachers Group 1, 13-01-03

4.55 – 5.35 discussion
This was an energetic and talkative group with individuals having to make a certain amount of effort to gain space to make their points. Generally the tone was very positive and the group talked a little over the allocated time.

Teachers Group 2, 20-01-03

This group was scheduled to contain the remaining three teachers whom I had not met to date. In fact one teacher was absent as she was out on a course. (This meant I had included all but one teacher – and previously all but one member of the senior management team).

After I had made all my opening remarks about the sequence of events, confidentiality arrangements etc., one of the two teachers stated emphatically that she would not take part in the taped discussion. She was always uneasy about having her voice recorded. The other teacher appeared a little uncertain but did not state any opposition to being recorded.

I invited the unwilling teacher to remain in the room whilst the second teacher was being interviewed. I gave the reason that it would probably be to her benefit to witness the entire data gathering process as all other research participants had done. I gave an additional reason that the unwilling teacher might also be willing to keep her colleague company during the interview process, particularly as no other participant had been interviewed alone.

At this stage the second teacher started to show unwillingness to participate in the taped interview. The author reassured her and the interview started. After the interview has been in progress for about five minutes, the first, unwilling teacher started to join in and ultimately made a contribution equivalent in word count to her colleague.

After the initial difficulties, the interview continued without any reluctance being declared, but the dialogue remained at a surface level. It did not seem to yield rich data.

TAs Group 1, 26-11-02

10.00 - 11.30 focus group but this included morning break so it amounted to a little more than 45 minutes' discussion.

A slightly odd start to the session inasmuch as many of them appeared to resist the prospect of discussion and were concerned about confidentiality issues. However these concerns appeared to evaporate almost as soon as they appeared.

The programme for the morning was disrupted somewhat by the TAs being required by senior management to leave my room earlier than anticipated to carry out playground supervision as a result of staff absences. Before they departed I checked with them that it was in their interests to return and complete the interview and they readily agreed that this was the case. They did return on time and without my needing to go and find them.

There were two major issues which concerned them. One issue was their job insecurity. There had been several TA redundancies around one year ago and they feared a repetition at the end of the current financial year. There was an additional related issue around how the redundancies had been handled i.e. in a meeting of all TAs they were spoken to on the strictures of the school budget and then the names of the redundant staff were announced.

Senior management apparently apologised later about the way in which the above had been handled, but resentment had set in.

There is a second issue around communication, which is indeed the issue which the head had identified above at the start of this project and which had been identified in the school OFSTED report. TAs are concerned that they are left out of the communication cycle of school issues; they are not in sufficient communication with the S and many are not in communication with the class teachers that they work with.

The communication issue was highlighted for me in that my programme for today had been changed without letting me know beforehand. I had only one TA group to see when I thought I had two. The second group were re-scheduled for another day.

Also on the TAs returning to my room after going out to do the playground supervision, they told me that, in the end, this work had not been required; they had not been told (neither had I) and my session could in fact have continued uninterrupted, as planned.

As with other groups, the TAs appeared to enjoy the session but I am faced with a problem throughout this research of conveying my findings to managers in a

positive way. Managers are probably aware of the above issues. How can I package them in a way that is positive and suggests a useful way forward?

TAs Group 2, 13-01-03

No resistance from this group, in contrast to the first group of TAs. Unlike the first group, there was no interruption by their having to attend playground or other duties during the session.

Bursar and Site Manager, 13-01-03

The site manager was very keen to volunteer details of his career history and was very smiling and involved in the session as if pleased that he had been invited to take part. The bursar made an opening remark that she had consulted her union about taking part in this exercise, but, having made her point she also appeared positive about taking part.

Winmax Data Analysis Layout

Only a selection of the data analysed in Winmax has been presented in this thesis (see Section 3.2.3.). The view below contains data on additional groups including teaching assistants.

The Winmax programme does not actively seek meaning from the text. It is a copy and paste facility, allowing segments of text of varying sizes, from one word to several lines, to be highlighted and placed under a code, the wording of which is decided by the user.

The example below illustrates the four main areas of data presented to the user. In 'List of texts' (top left) each focus group is titled and listed separately. Data selected for presentation in this thesis was for teacher managers comprising the head and senior management team (SMT). In addition to a second group of teachers and two groups of teaching assistants, there was a group of support staff, comprising the bursar and site manager.

The prefixes (a) (b) and so on were added because Winmax automatically lists the titles of texts in alphabetical order. The order chosen followed a convenient sequence from managers, teachers, then on through the school hierarchy.

The 'List of codes' (bottom left) contains all the codes for all focus groups. The researcher created wording for headings and codes to comply with the maximum number of characters allowed by Winmax.

For example in the heading

aQ1 MAN WAT CAUSE STAF STRES?

'Q1' refers to focus group question 1;

'MAN' designates the question as having been put to managers;

'WAT CAUSE STAF STRESS? Is an abbreviated version of the focus group question 1, "What causes work-related stress in your staff?"

'a' was inserted as a prefix, in order to enable the Winmax programme to automatically place this question as the first question listed.

For example in the codes:

'R' was inserted as a suffix to denote a code for which a corresponding issue or concept had been identified in the review of literature in Chapter 1.

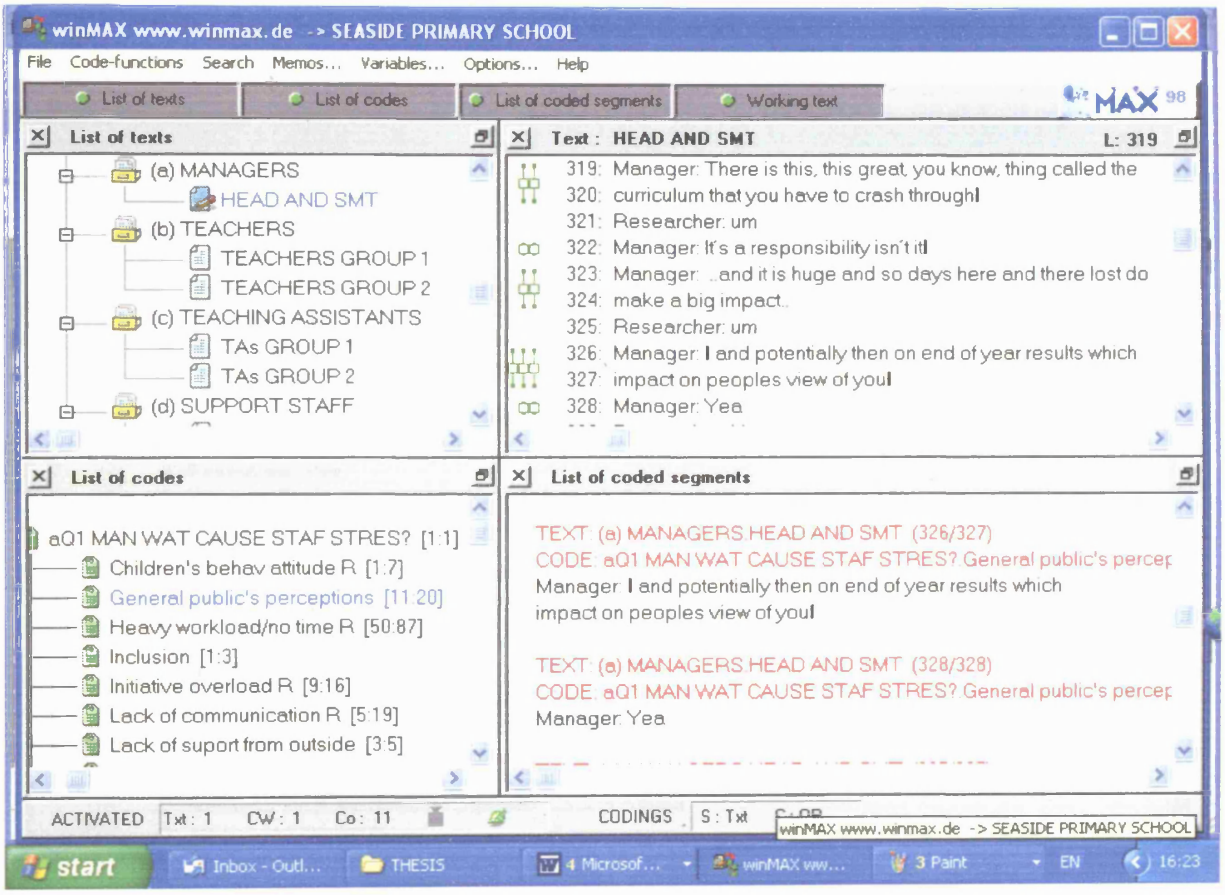
[11:20] signifies that a given code occurs 11 times and occupies a total of 21 lines of text.

A total list of all codes generated is not visible on any of the available screen layouts.

During the coding process the 'Text' (top right) is also visible on the screen with each line numbered. When a segment of text has been selected (green highlight) and allocated a code, the Winword programme creates a green symbol, adJacent to that segment of text, in a column on the left of the Text. Placing the cursor on the green symbol reveals the wording of the code (not shown). Where two or more green symbols are adJacent to each other, the same text segment has been assigned more than one code (double coded). A yellow symbol in the extreme left hand column denotes a 'memo' has been written by the researcher. For example, in teacher managers' text, line 25, the memo said, "Watch for 'workload' to be unpacked into component parts.'"

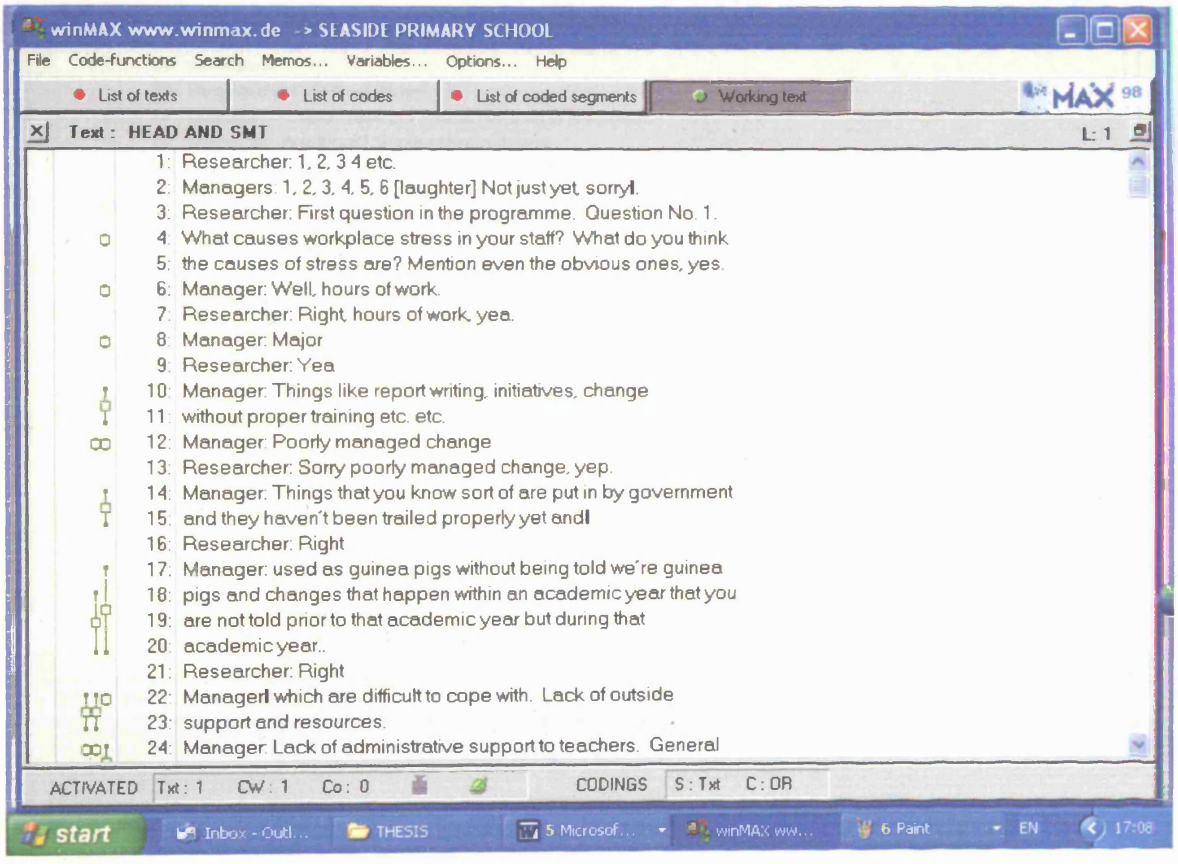
Any single code such as *General public's perceptions* can be selected (blue highlight) and all the text segments assigned to that code can be gathered together and listed under 'List of coded segments' (bottom right).

Winmax Overview on Screen

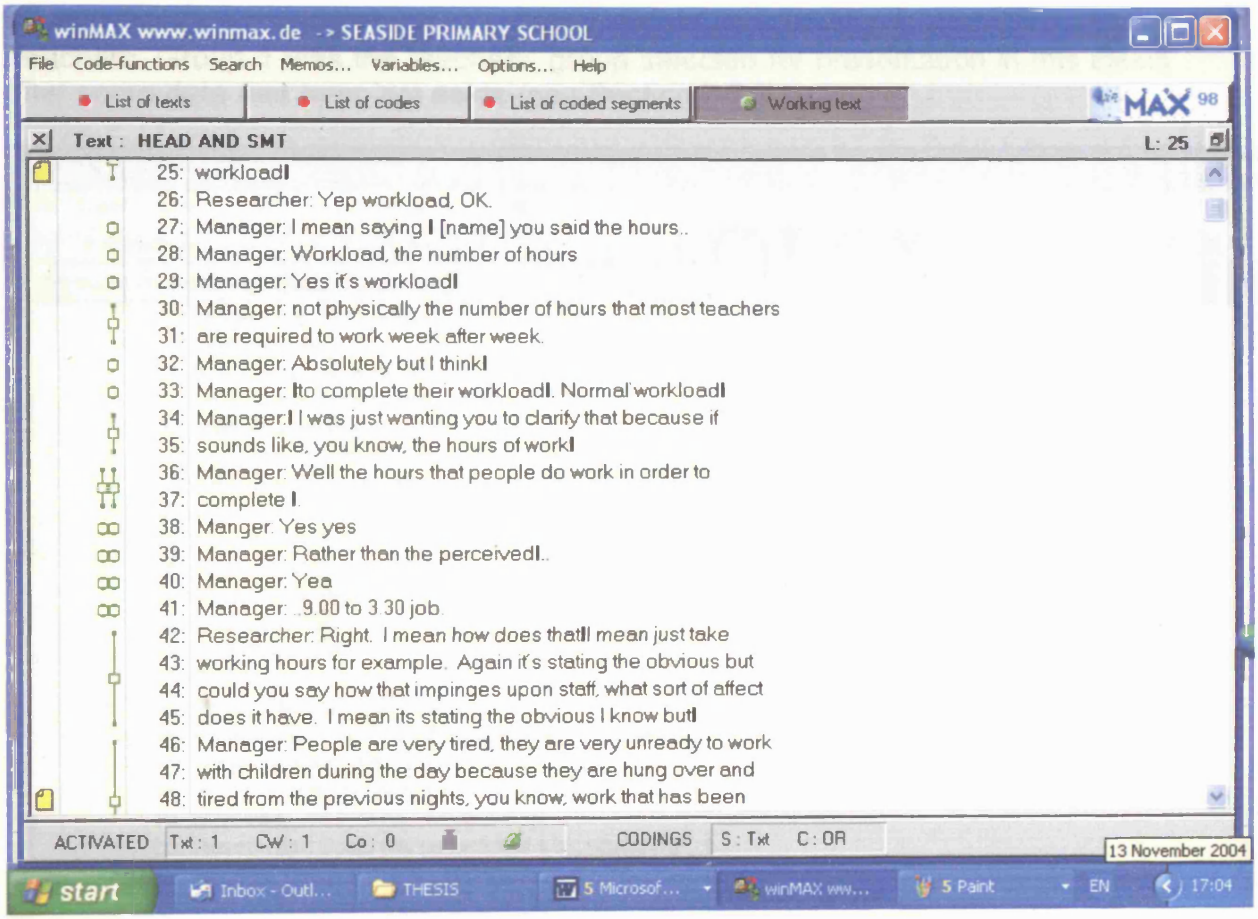


Samples of Teacher Managers' Transcript

Managers' Sample 1



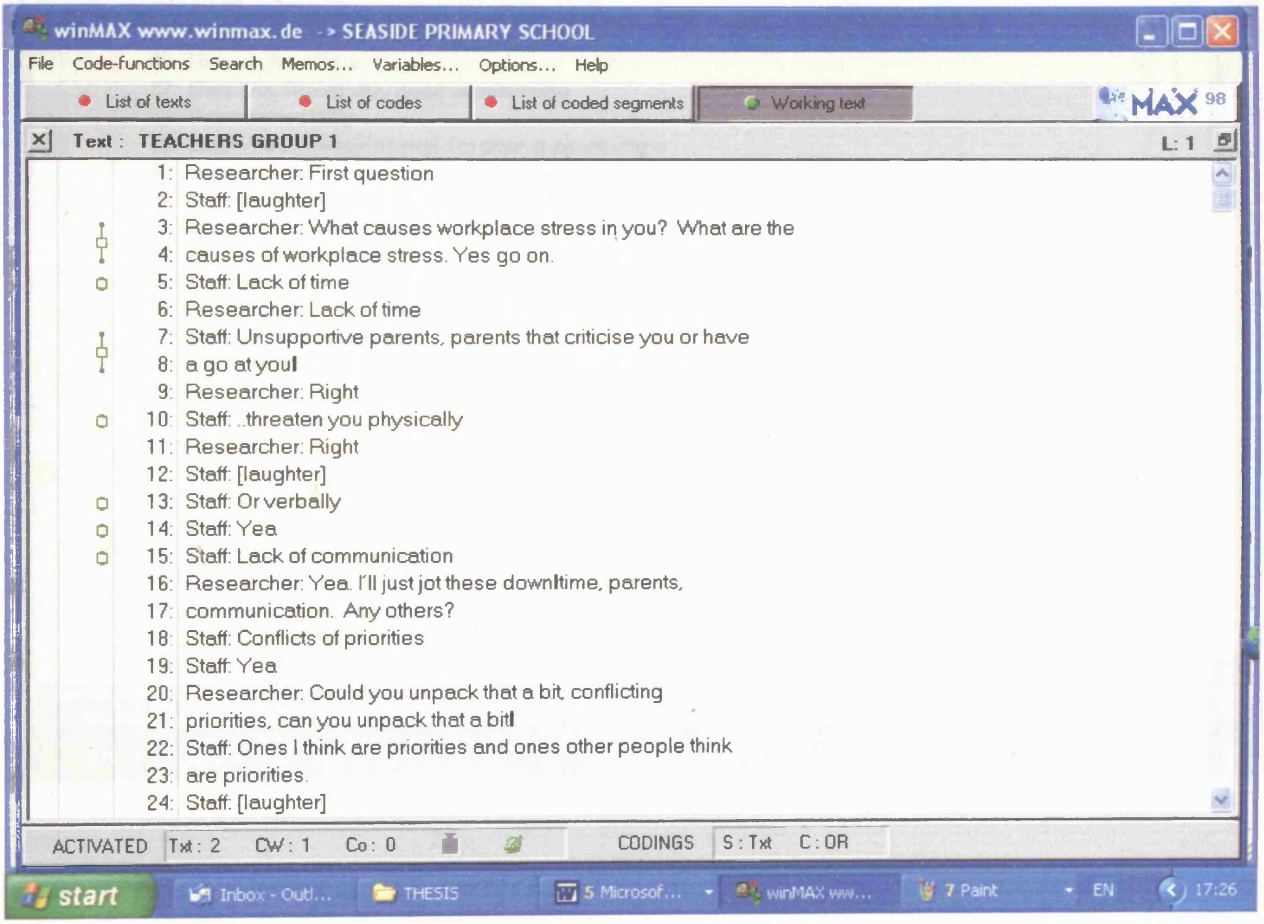
Managers' Sample 2



Samples of Teachers' Transcript

Teachers' Sample 1

Teachers' Group 1 was the teachers' group selected for presentation in this thesis after some data had been set aside (see Section 3.2.3.).



Teachers Sample 2

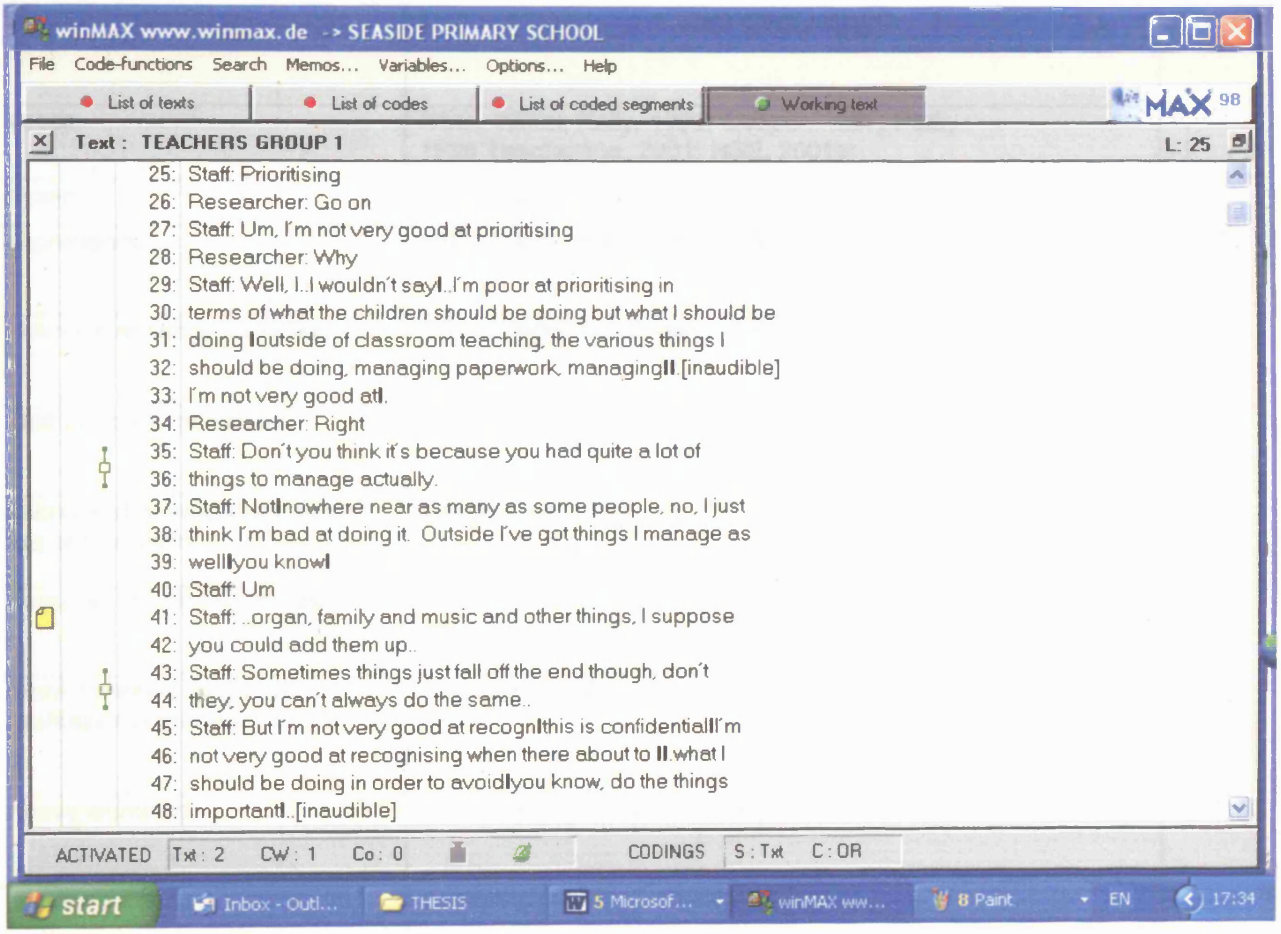


Table Ap 2.3. Literature reviewed in Chapter 1

THEME	REFERENCES
stress	HSC, 1990a; Kelly, 1992; Cooper, 1997; HSC, 1999;Teacherline, 2001; HSE, 2001b;
anxiety	HSC, 1990a; Teacherline, 2001; HSC, 1999; HSE, 2001b;
depression	HSC, 1990a; HSC, 1999; HSE, 2001b;
sickness absence increased	HSC, 1990a; Teacherline, 2001
staff turnover increased	Teacherline, 2001
decreased morale/low morale/ low self-esteem	Teacherline, 2001
decrease in Job applicants	Teacherline, 2001
more stressed than other professional groups	Teacherline, 2001
heavy workload	CBI, 1999; General Teaching Council, 2002
paperwork	General Teaching Council, 2002
initiative overload	General Teaching Council, 2002
target-driven culture	General Teaching Council, 2002
pupil behaviour	General Teaching Council, 2002
inspection	General Teaching Council, 2002
perceived low status of teachers	General Teaching Council, 2002
pay	General Teaching Council, 2002
parents	General Teaching Council, 2002

Resources/budget	General Teaching Council, 2002
curriculum changes	Travers & Cooper, 1996
Financial/funding arrangements changes	Travers & Cooper, 1996
management changes	Travers & Cooper, 1996
pay changes	Travers & Cooper, 1996
conditions of service changes/suggestion of a wider role	Travers & Cooper, 1996
public expenditure cuts	Travers & Cooper, 1996
increased uncertainty	Travers & Cooper, 1996
Job insecurity	Travers & Cooper, 1996
restructuring of teaching	Travers & Cooper, 1996
routine admin and clerical tasks	School Development Plan, 2002 - 2004
workload	School Development Plan, 2002 - 2004
health and safety concerns	School Development Plan, 2002 - 2004
communication	School's OFSTED Report, 4-7 Oct. '99
Job satisfaction	Briner; 1993
pressure from manager	CBI, 1999
high workload	CBI, 1999
relationships at work	Cooper, Cooper & Eaker, 1988.

communication	Cooper, Cooper & Eaker, 1988
organisational climate	Cooper, Cooper & Eaker, 1988
managers may not be sufficiently aware of stress/aware they may create stress	Cooper, Cooper & Eaker, 1988
distinction between personal and workplace stress	HSE, 1995
managers' view that stress as an over-used word	The Mental Health Foundation, 2001
managers' view cost of stress is not as high as it is claimed to be	The Mental Health Foundation, 2001
managers feel responsible for dealing with workplace stress but do not want to address a potential mix of personal and workplace stress	The Mental Health Foundation, 2001
managers are not clear how to deal with stress	The Mental Health Foundation, 2001
managers are less stressed than their staff	The Mental Health Foundation, 2001
staff and unions see stress as a problem whilst managers are less aware of stress.	CBI 1999, 2002
staff feel they are not treated fairly	Novelli, 1995; Geurts et al,1999; Taris, Kalimo & Schaufeli, 2002; Adams, 1963; Truchot & Deregard, 2001.
staff need more involvement/feel they are not properly involved in discussions on change	Nytro et al, 2000
managers talk about their own stress rather than staff stress/managers too stressed to help staff	Coe, 1993; Cox, 1993; HSE, 2001b;
need for informal groups/peer support	Martin, 1998
managers and staff share a transactional definition of stress	Cox, 1993;HSE, 1995; HSC, 1990a; HSE, 2003.
is the organisation is good at learning from "failure"	Nytro et al, 2000

is the organisation good at involvement and negotiation	Nytro et al, 2000
is the organisation good at willingness and ability to manage change.	Nytro et al, 2000
working with children is a positive experience;	General Teaching Council, 2002 GTC lists above as "Demotivating factors" (p.5) rather than stress factors per se.
teacher role is creative/varied;	General Teaching Council, 2002
positive experience of this school;	General Teaching Council, 2002
high Job satisfaction;	General Teaching Council, 2002
long holidays;	General Teaching Council, 2002
hours fit in with family.	General Teaching Council, 2002
Managers create stress	Arroba & James 1987
Stress intrinsic to the Job	Cooper 1988
Culture, demands, control, role, change, relationships, support	Palmer, Cooper & Thomas, 2001

Trust between managers and staff/ need for more trust.	Porter et al, 1975; Beer, Eisenstat & Spector, 1988; Argyris 1990;
Staff feel they are not treated fairly/need for fairer treatment	Novelli, 1995; Geurts et al,1999; Taris, Kalimo & Schaufeli, 2002; Adams, 1963; Truchot & Deregard, 2001.
Staff need to feel they have some control over work issues/need for more control.	Jimmieson, (2000); Troup and Dewe (2002); Spector (1998)
Managers and staff have different values/staff need to have values shared with manager	Daniels 1996; Martin, 1998;
Staff's unstated assumptions which oppose change	Nytro et al, 2000;
Staff's misunderstanding and mistrust	Nytro et al, 2000;

Staff's fatigue from repeated exposure to change from a succession of managers/ turnover of managers	Nytro et al, 2000;
Staff's resentment about managers' seeking to control change;	Nytro et al, 2000;
Staff's unresolved anxieties;	Nytro et al, 2000;
Staff's passive sabotage;	Nytro et al, 2000;
Staff's subversion;	
Staff's not seeing the need for change proposed;	Nytro et al, 2000;
Staff's not seeing the proposed intervention as suitable to address the identified problem;	Nytro et al, 2000;
Staff's not valuing working parties and want an expert opinion;	Nytro et al, 2000;
Staff's unwillingness to relinquish old practices/ existing methods dominate.	Nytro et al, 2000;
Espoused theory	Argyris, 1990
Managers are too stressed to help staff with their stress	Coe, 1993; Cox, 1993
Cause of stress is internal	Weiner (1980)
Cause of stress is external	Weiner (1980)
Cause of stress is stable	Weiner (1980)
Cause of stress is unstable	Weiner (1980)
Cause of stress is controllable	Weiner (1980)
Cause of stress is uncontrollable	Weiner (1980)
Manager's	Argyris, 1990

defensiveness	
Manager need to be in control	Argyris, 1990
Manager need to avoid threat and embarrassment	Argyris, 1990
Staff misunderstanding	Argyris, 1990
Staff mistrust	Argyris, 1990
blame of others/ externalising blame	Argyris, 1990
allowing existing methods to dominate	Argyris, 1990
Managers behaving unreasonably when confronted	Argyris, 1990
Managers lacking insight into need for control etc	Argyris, 1990
managers do not practice what they preach.	Argyris, 1990
I hide my thoughts/feelings	Argyris 1990
openness	NEO 5
conscientiousness	NEO 5
agreeableness	NEO 5
Culture, demands, control, role, change, relationships, support	Palmer, Cooper and Thomas, 2001